



Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية (الراي)

Hamas may take part in elections

GAZA CITY (AFP) — A senior official in the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) said for the first time Friday that the group, which opposes the autonomy deal, may take part in elections to a Palestinian self-rule council and form a political party. "We are ready to participate in elections to a legislative council but not to a council which has a purely administrative role, as envisaged in the accord with Israel," said Ismael Haniyeh. "It is possible, under these conditions, to form a political party catering for all Muslims and not just Hamas supporters." Mr. Haniyeh told the Palestine daily published here. Hamas is one of several hardline Palestinian groups opposed to the autonomy accord which launched self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho in May. Mr. Haniyeh said Hamas would continue to fight against Israeli occupation until Palestinians won "true independence." Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) are to begin talks on Monday in Cairo to prepare the ground for elections to a Palestinian council, which would mark the second phase of Palestinian self-rule.

Volume 18 Number 5729

AMMAN SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1994, RABI' ALTHANI 25, 1415

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

Crown Prince heads for U.S. seeking to advance peace process

Jordan-Israel treaty only after outstanding problems settled, King-Rabin statement says

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan left Amman for the United States on Friday ahead of a meeting at the White House Monday with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres aimed at speeding up progress toward a peace agreement.

Western diplomats in Amman have said Israel may announce a withdrawal from Jordanian territory it has occupied since 1968 at the Washington meeting, which will be hosted by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The meeting follows a summit at the Red Sea resort of Aqaba Thursday between His Majesty King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The two leaders said after the summit that they hoped negotiations for a peace accord would end successfully "after solutions are found as quickly as possible to outstanding problems."

"Several issues remain to be resolved and the negotiations on them will be continued when talks between the parties resume following the return of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan from his forthcoming visit to the United States," the two sides said in the communiqué.

The issues — "including water, boundary and security" — will also be discussed in Israeli-Jordanian talks scheduled for Oct. 10-20, said the communiqué.

"It is hoped that in these subsequent negotiations, to be held in the region, the resolution of all outstanding issues will result in the achievement of a treaty of peace," it said.

A senior Jordanian official said Friday that progress was made on an Israeli withdrawal from Jordanian land occupied after the 1967 Middle East war.

"Despite the fact that the

withdrawal issue has not yet been completed, the summit highlighted many points of agreement, to be tackled in depth" in the next round of bilateral talks on Oct. 10-20, he told AFP.

The official, who refused to be named, reiterated that Jordan would not sign a treaty "before agreements on all the questions ... land and borders, water-sharing and security." And that could take months, he said.

According to Western diplomats, Israel agrees to withdraw from most of the Jordanian land apart from 17 square kilometres in the Aqaba-Eilat triangle on the Red Sea and south of the Dead Sea.

Instead, the Jewish state has offered to hand over the same amount of land elsewhere, they said.

Mr. Rabin said meanwhile that Israel and Jordan had not finished drafting a peace treaty because they were still

negotiating their border.

The two countries formally ended a 46-year state of belligerency in an agreement signed in Washington July 25, but postponed a full-fledged agreement pending a resolution of disputes over water sources and borders.

Israeli reports have speculated that an accord could be announced in Washington Monday.

But hopes for a quick agreement diminished after Mr. Rabin failed to bridge differences in Thursday's Aqaba summit.

Speaking publicly for the first time after the summit, Mr. Rabin told reporters after meeting Egypt's tourism minister, Mamdouh Al Beltaji in Tel Aviv Friday:

"There is still no full draft of a peace treaty. We are at the stage of setting an international border which would be a border of peace between Jordan and Israel."

He added that negotiations

would continue in October.

In Jordan, sources said that Israel is objecting to Jordanian demands for an immediate pullout from nearly 381 square kilometres of desert and farmland along the borders of the two states.

The Jordanian sources said King Hussein was asking Israel to commit itself to a timetable for withdrawal but that the Israelis were only ready to announce an intention to withdraw.

Water is also a key issue. A senior Israeli official said the King and Mr. Rabin "made a list of points of Israeli-Jordanian agreement on water-sharing, the borders and security."

Israeli Television reported that a timetable for the signing of a peace accord would be announced in the coming weeks.

Jordan wants its share of the water sources running

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MAHATHIR VISITS PETRA: Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, who began a visit of Petra on Friday (see page 3)

Jordan to lobby Paris Club for debt relief during IMF talks

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan plans to advance its efforts for debt relief during meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Madrid attended by finance ministers from all over the world. Finance Minister Sami Gammoh said Friday.

Mr. Gammoh, who is scheduled to leave for the Spanish capital today (Saturday) leading the Jordanian delegation to the meetings, said he was confident that the Kingdom's creditors grouped in the Paris Club of governments would respond positively to the Jordanian call for debt relief.

Speaking one day after Jordan and the United States signed an agreement under which Washington wrote off \$220 million of the Kingdom's debts, Mr. Gammoh said Jordan expected the IMF to lend a helping hand to the efforts for debt relief.

"The IMF is very supportive of the Jordanian stand," Mr. Gammoh told the Jordan Times, noting that the international economic watchdog's appraisal of the Kingdom's economic performance

during the first six months of 1994 was highly positive.

Almost all finance ministers of the Paris Club group of creditor governments are expected to attend the Madrid meeting of the IMF, which will also provide an ideal forum for group consultations and decision.

The Paris Club holds about \$4 billion of Jordan's foreign debts which stood at \$6.68 billion at the end of 1993. More than half of that amount have already been rescheduled for periods exceeding 20 years.

Diplomats also noted that there was no hard and fast rule that stipulated that rescheduled debts could not be written off and that Jordanian approaches had already been made through diplomatic channels to the concerned governments.

Some of the European governments, traditional aid donors to Jordan, have already extended debt relief to the Kingdom, including Britain by about \$100 million and Germany with about \$30 million. France, one of Jordan's largest creditors, have written off \$5 million.

Jordan is aiming to secure

at least 50 per cent write-off of its debts, so that the Kingdom could regain the international creditworthiness it rated before 1989, when its economy had hit dire straits.

Since then, the Kingdom has managed to bring down the level of debts and streamlined its economy despite further problems created by the Gulf crisis of 1990, but it is seeking further reduction of the foreign debts to a level of about 75 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP). This would mean a debt relief of about \$3.5 billion.

The United States is extending to Jordan a write-off of \$702 million spread over three years. The agreement signed by Mr. Gammoh and American Ambassador Wesley Egan on Thursday covered \$220 million. The remainder of the debt relief would be written off in fiscal 1995 and 1996 after the administration makes provisions in the budgets for those years.

It was expected that Minister of State and Information Minister Jawad Al Anani

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PNA team expected Tuesday

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Hakam Balawi, senior official of the Palestine National Authority (PNA), left Amman on Friday after talks on Jordanian-Palestinian relations and preparations for a new round of discussions on cooperation in various spheres.

A high-level PNA team is expected here on Tuesday for the discussions, a senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official said.

Mr. Balawi, a close confidant of PNA President Yasser Arafat, was received by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Jafar on Thursday. After the talks, Mr. Balawi told

reporters there were no Jordanian-Palestinian differences and described reports of a strain in relations as exaggerated and unfounded.

He also welcomed Jordan's decision on Tuesday to sever all links with Islamic holy shrines in the Israeli-occupied territories except those in Jerusalem.

"His Majesty King Hussein's decision in 1988 to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank was in support of the Palestinian cause and reflected a true commitment to the Palestinian principles and goals," Mr. Balawi said.

The Kingdom's decision last week to include the Islamic Waqf and all holy sites in

the West Bank except those in Jerusalem in the severance of ties "falls within the context of the 1988 move" and will "support national Palestinian action," Mr. Balawi said.

"Jordan has proved time and again that it works to help achieve the national interests of the Palestinians," he added.

Mr. Arafat himself welcomed the Jordanian move announced last week but refrained from commenting on Jordan's affirmation that it would continue to play its historic role in the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem.

It was not clear, however,

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1 killed in Hebron

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian when he stabbed and wounded a soldier in the occupied West Bank town of Hebron on Friday, Israeli security sources said.

"They said the incident took place near the Ibrahim Mosque in the heart of Hebron, home to 110,000 Palestinians. The complex has been closed to the public since a Jewish settler killed more than 30 worshippers at the mosque there on Feb. 25.

Palestinian sources said the Israeli army immediately imposed a curfew on the centre of Hebron, where about 400 Jewish settlers live in several small, fortified enclaves.

In Tunis, Palestinian lead-

er Yasser Arafat said on Friday that an Israeli decision to strengthen a band of Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank violated the peace deal signed last year.

"Any change in the settlements by expanding them or introducing any change in them is a violation of the agreement," Mr. Arafat told journalists at Tunis airport when asked to comment on Israel's decision.

Mr. Arafat was leaving Tunis for the Gaza Strip after a two-day visit to Spain and two stopovers in Tunis.

Israel said on Wednesday it regarded some settlements in the West Bank as "part" of the Jewish State and could go

(Continued from page 12)

Two dead in clashes in Port-au-Prince

PORT-AU-PRINCE (Agencies) — At least two people were killed in central Port-au-Prince on Friday in clashes between supporters and opponents of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

One man was apparently eaten to death by the pro-Aristide crowd who accused him of being a civilian "attaché" paramilitary collaborators of the Haitian armed forces and police.

The other fatality was an Aristide supporter killed with a bullet to the head to full view of several journalists.

The incident occurred as the pro-Aristide demonstrators headed to the capital's largest cemetery and passed by the headquarters of the Front for Advancement and Progress in Haiti (FRAPH) which supports the military junta that overthrew Mr. Aristide in September 1991.

Foreign journalists stepped in to protect one alleged FRAPH member from being snatched by the pro-Aristide demonstrators. The man said he was simply an innocent seller of goat meat whose hands were bloodied by his rage.

The pro-Aristide marchers snatched and retreated in the face of hostility from the pro-military group, which has links to the Duvalier family which ruled Haiti by fiat for three decades until 1986.

An undetermined number of other people were injured, said Cross ambulance personnel told AFP.

An international wire service photographer suffered a

forehead and was taken to a U.S. hospital ship for treatment.

The bullet grazed the photographer's head, according to an AFP photographer on the scene.

U.S. troops, deployed heavily in the capital for the demonstration, have not intervened in any of the disturbances.

The Haiti parliament is considering amnesty for the coup leaders who toppled Mr. Aristide. It is part of a deal worked out by a delegation headed by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter a week ago Sunday that averted an invasion of Haiti.

Although part of the deal did not call for the military leaders to leave Haiti soil, Clinton administration officials and Mr. Aristide said they want them to depart.

Thousands of Aristide supporters, some carrying signs waving "violence no, democracy yes," had taken to the streets to reassert the power stolen from them by a military coup three years ago.

Pro-army militiamen with machetes, guns and sticks were waiting for them, vow-

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Yemeni parliament to elect new president

ADEN (R) — Yemeni leader Ali Abdullah Saleh looks certain to follow his military victory over southern secessionists with reelection as president on Saturday, parliamentary sources said on Friday.

Parliament will meet on Saturday to elect a new president for the next five years. Constitutional amendments approved by parliament on Wednesday left Mr. Saleh Yemen's undisputed leader. Under the amendments, the ruling five-member presidential council of which Mr. Saleh was chairman was abolished, replaced by a president of the republic.

Mr. Saleh led the conservative North Yemen until it united with South Yemen in 1990. Loyalist troops southern secessionists in a two-month civil war earlier this year.

Mr. Saleh, who stands for his General Peoples Congress, has said priority will be given to rebuilding areas damaged in the conflict.

Other main amendments included the move towards a free market economy, replacing a mixture of central planning and private enterprise economy.

Mr. Saleh promised the people last weekend a "revolution against corruption."

"The government and parliament will shoulder their responsibility to eradicating

corruption from the government machinery and purge corrupt elements," he said in a speech.

He also vowed to liberalise the economy, battered by the civil war, alleviate economic suffering and cut inflation now running at more than 100 per cent a year.

Among other candidates are Sheikh Abdul Majid Zindani of the main Islamist party, Islah, and Ali Saleh Abhad Mughil, recently elected secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party in lieu of former Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh who fled the country after the defeat of his secessionist bid.

Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Faisal Ben Shamlan is the candidate of independent members of parliament, while Abdul Wahab Mahmoud is the candidate of the Socialist Arab Baath Party.

Exiles set up front

Yemeni politicians who went into exile after the defeat of their breakaway southern state in July announced on Friday the establishment of a new alliance grouping Yemeni opposition parties.

In a statement issued at a news conference in London, the newly-formed National Opposition Front in London condemned President Saleh's



Ali Abdullah Saleh

administration, rejected the outcome of the two-month civil war and called for a national referendum on the present government's performance.

Launching the new alliance, Abdul Rahman Al Jifrey, said it was committed to exerting peaceful pressure on the president to bring him to the negotiating table to talk with the new opposition group about "national unity" in Yemen.

But representatives from the alliance would not rule out using armed struggle to force him into talks if all else failed.

"We cannot say no," Haidar Abu Bakr Al Attas, former prime minister told Reuters when asked whether force might eventually have to be used.

Britain opposes setting date for end to Iraq ban

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd has said that Britain opposes giving Iraq any target date for lifting the crippling U.N. oil embargo.

The Iraqi government wants the United Nations to say that if all goes well in weapons monitoring for a certain period of time, then the oil embargo will be lifted. Speaking at a news conference after his address to the General Assembly, Mr. Hurd said Rolf Ekeus, the head of the U.N. commission monitoring Iraq's weapons programme, should define what he expects in future compliance on eliminating Iraq's capacity to produce weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Hurd said there should be a "testing period" but added, "we don't believe in putting some date on that period. We should let events run and put Iraqi compliance under scrutiny without giving them at the moment the benefit of (setting) a cutoff date."

Mr. Ekeus previously has said that it was necessary to run all monitoring systems for about six months before he would be able to tell the council whether Iraq is in compliance with Gulf war ceasefire terms for lifting the oil embargo.

Recently, however, Mr. Ekeus has not been talking about a time-frame or count-down, which Britain and the United States strongly oppose.

The Gulf war ceasefire resolution says that once certain conditions are met to eliminate Iraq's capability of producing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and long-range missiles, then the oil embargo will be lifted.

But the United States and Britain have demanded that Baghdad meet other conditions, for example recognising the Kuwait border and ending political repression.

As permanent members of the Security Council, the United States and Britain can veto any resolution to lift the oil embargo.

France, Russia and China — the other permanent members of the council — favour moving towards ending the embargo and not letting it continue indefinitely.

Iraq's deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz, is in New York meeting with various government officials here for the General Assembly.

tinned aerial protection of Iraq's Kurds, a Turkish foreign affairs spokesman said Wednesday.

"The date for the meeting has not yet been set," said the spokesman, Ferhat Ataman, at a weekly press conference.

Two similar meetings have been held since December 1992 on the Iraqi question and the multinational force deployed at Turkey's strategic Incirlik airbase.

Now, there are doubts about Turkey's commitment to the deal. New Turkish Foreign Minister Muztar Soyas is said to be sceptical about the usefulness to Turkey of hosting such a force.

Set up in July 1991, it is composed of a strike force of British, French and U.S. planes, with logistic back-up from the Turkish airforce.

The force is responsible for aerial surveillance over northern Iraq and maintaining the "no-fly" zone north of the 36th Parallel, imposed on Iraq by the Gulf war allies to protect the Kurdish population against Iraqi government troops.

The Turkish parliament must decide in December on renewing the allies' mandate in Turkey, due to expire on Dec. 31. It was extended for a six-month period last June.

Egyptian militants opt for 'soft' targets

CAIRO (AFP) — Islamic militants in Egypt have staged a comeback with attacks on tourists and policemen after a lull of several months, but security experts say their operations are being restricted to "soft" targets.

"Their attacks reveal nothing but weakness," said a diplomat at the U.S. embassy who monitors the militants' activities.

"They are still shooting at buses and innocent people to get the attention of the media and trying to say 'We're alive,' when they know they're not," he said, asking not to be named.

When militants launched their violent campaign to topple the secular government of President Hosni Mubarak in March 1992, they hit a wide range of targets including senior government officials and public figures.

They also targeted economic establishments like banks, as well as the tourism industry. Around 450 people, 10 of them tourists, have been killed in the confrontation between the state and militants.

Since their resurgence, militants have so far limited attacks to unarmed civilians and tourists, or police in southern Egypt where the militants still have a strong presence.

A government crackdown forced the militants into relative inactivity, after police shot dead Talaat Youssef Hammam, the "brain" behind their campaign, on April 25.

Security forces have since rounded up or shot dead militants across the country, and cut off the groups' communication links both internally and with support groups abroad.

But on Aug. 26, the militants made a surprise comeback when they opened fire in the southern province of Qena on a bus-load of Spanish tourists, killing a teenager.

The outlawed Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah, the largest militant group, claimed the attack. And since Sept. 17, the militants have killed 12 policemen in southern Egypt, as well as three Egyptian civilians and a German tourist.

On Tuesday, a militant shot dead the German and two Egyptians and wounded another Egyptian in the Red Sea resort of Hurgada.

On the same night, gunmen opened fire on a train in the southern province of Minya, wounding two Egyptians.

But the new wave of attacks is not on "the same level... as before," said Hafez Abu Suda of the Egyptian Human Rights Organisation.

Attacks on tourists have been successful because "they are soft target and require primitive planning," he said.

The attacks have been limited to areas where they are least expected, like Hurgada, or the southern province of Sohag, Qena and Minya. In comparison, Cairo has been quiet.

The U.N. world population conference, staged in Cairo from Sept. 5 to 13, passed free of attacks, "proving the militants did not have the capability to carry out attacks in Cairo," said Mr. Abu Suda.

But tourism is once again under threat after the attack in Hurgada, which was previously considered a safe haven.

The militants have been using the lull "to regroup and reestablish contacts with each other, and to look for new leaders," said a high-ranking Cairo security official.

The resurgence should not be taken lightly, warned Mr. Abu Suda.

Referring to a militant pledge to revive their campaign, he said: "It means they have plans to back it up. I expect they will send in leaders from Afghanistan or Sudan."

The U.S. diplomat agreed on the need for caution. "The government has to be on the alert. The danger is not completely erased. If not blood and resources reach the militants, it (the danger) will be revived," he warned.

Family of policeman demands murder probe

GAZA (R) — The family of the first Palestinian policeman killed in the line of duty in the self-rule territories demanded on Thursday that security forces be "brought to account" for leaving him to bleed to death.

Yusri Al Hams was killed two weeks ago when Palestinian police and security men tried to detain two men from Izzeddine Al Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of the Hamas group.

"The security apparatus members who were in the area must be brought to account for failing to come to the aid of the martyr and for leaving him bleeding on the ground," a statement issued by the Hams family said.

Palestinian police said Hams was killed by the Hamas men, but the Islamic group said other security men shot him. Police said they were investigating the incident.

The Hams family, appearing to point a finger towards Palestinian security officials, said the police officer was killed after he went into the men's car in order to escort them to a police station.

"Why wasn't the martyr left to go with the two Qassam members to the police station, as the martyr wanted, so there would be an investigation into the matter?" the statement said.

"The one responsible for the martyr's blood is the one who fired the shots and must be brought to account."

The family also demanded an answer as to why shots were fired at the men in the car rather than at its tyres.

The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) took over security in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho enclave on the West Bank this year under its peace deal with Israel.

UAE stops visas to Indians

DUBAI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates is to stop granting visas to Indians and suspend the postal service with the subcontinent to prevent pneumonic plague from entering the country, officials said Friday.

Colonel Juma Aman, head of immigration at Dubai, said the UAE had decided to suspend indefinitely "the granting of holiday, work and transit visas to Indians."

Meanwhile, postal authorities decided to suspend mail from India, where an outbreak of pneumonic plague claimed its first victims in the capital New Delhi on Friday.

Some 400,000 Indians live in the UAE.

The emirates together with five other Gulf states and Yemen has already cut off its air and shipping links with India.

Abu Dhabi also decided Thursday to suspend livestock and food imports from India, and step up naval patrols along its coastline to prevent Indians entering the country illegally.

The UAE, Kuwait and Qatar have launched airlifts to bring back their citizens stranded in the subcontinent.

No cases of pneumonic plague have been reported in the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states — Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman — where more than one million Indians live and work.

The plague outbreak has killed 50 people in the western Indian city of Surat and two more in New Delhi. Another 1,463 cases have been reported.

Health Minister Ahmad Ben Said Al Badi "stressed the importance of preventing small ships and wooden launches from entering (the UAE) from India under the decrees preventing air and sea journeys," the official Emirates news agency (WAM) said.

Kiryat Arba was home to Baruch Goldstein, a U.S.-born settler who massacred more than 30 Muslim worshippers in a Hebron mosque last February.

Israel's parliamentary security committee, briefed recently on the investigation, had said secret police foiled "at the last minute" plans by militant Jews to kill Palestinians.

The affair is being widely compared in Israel to the activities in the early 1980s of a Jewish terror underground in the West Bank that carried out bombings against Palestinians and planned to blow up Al Aqsa Mosque.

Court overturns conviction

Israel's supreme court overturned on Thursday the murder conviction of a Palestinian who had been extradited from the United States and found guilty of killing a Jewish bus driver, the Iam news agency reported.

The tribunal cleared Mahmoud Atta, serving a life term since 1991, after casting doubt on statements by two prosecution witnesses that he took part in a shooting attack on an Israeli bus in the occupied West Bank in 1986.



Fans of slain Cheb Hasni mourn his death carrying his photo.

Slain Algerian singer laid to rest

TUNIS (R) — Slain Algerian pop star Cheb Hasni was buried in the western Algerian city of Oran on Friday, a day after he was shot several times by an unknown gunman, official radio Algeria reported.

No details of the funeral were given and there was still no information on who

killed the 26-year-old singer.

Cheb Hasni, whose real name was Hasni Chekroune, was killed in Oran, 355 kilometres west of Algiers, he performed Rai music, a mixture of rock and Western Algerian folk music, and had a strong following among

Algeria's younger generation.

The killing followed the kidnapping of noted Berber performer Matouh Lounes by a suspected Muslim fundamentalist armed group on Sunday evening from a cafe at Tizi Ouzou, 90 kilometres east of Algiers.

Change Mideast image — tour delegates

CAIRO (AFP) — The Middle East must counter the news media's focus on its wars and rise in Islamic militancy if tourism there is to flourish, delegates said Thursday at the end of a conference here.

"We have to get away from the image problem," Robert Whitley of the United States tour operators association told AFP.

"Tourist operators should suggest to their clients to write to editors of top newspapers saying what a wonderful time they had and how safe they felt," he added.

He urged governments in the Middle East to be open with the news media and not over-react. "They should react by saying they are working on it and not mislead people," he added.

The conference, organised by the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) under the auspices of the U.S. States Department, was held in the framework of the economic track of the Middle East multilateral talks.

Government and tourist industry representatives from 13 countries attended.

The conference produced "a working paper" which will be presented to the U.S. State Department so that in the next round of talks "they will have tangible suggestions to work with," said Chris Newman of Insight International Tours Inc., who headed one of the conference's working groups.

Political steps should also be taken to encourage regional tourism, said Mr. Newman.

While realising that "opening borders and (dropping) visas was the ideal situation, lesser steps could be taken," in the meantime, Mr. Newman added.

Thus the suggestions put forth include allowing tourists to use the same tourist operator throughout the region, as opposed to changing their guides and vehicles at each border.

Another suggestion is the establishment of multi-country visas, similar to the European visas, or at least to have reduced rates on separate visas.

Other suggestions include equating infrastructure and tourism facilities, like roads and hotels, across the region, and establishing a regional tourism union to promote, a unified tourism slogan.

Lahham quits theatre

AMMAN (Petra) — Actor Dureid Lahham, 61, has announced that he is quitting theatre for good as of Monday Oct. 3.

At a press conference held in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Mr. Lahham, popularly known as Ghawar Al Toshah, said his decision was irreversible.

He attributed his decision to three major reasons: First, he said, he was getting old and could no longer tolerate theatre work because such work needs the energy of youth. Second, he said, he had reached the peak in his theatre work and does not think he can perform any better in the future. Thirdly, he said, the Arabs, who are frustrated as a result of the current Arab situation, are no longer interested in great issues.

Mr. Lahham, who is currently on a visit to the UAE to perform there before quitting theatre, criticised Arab theatre saying that it was still in the experimental stage, adding that all performances are no more than theatre experiments, which lose value due to mixing them with dancing.

He added that the theatre movement was moving slowly and the real creative theatre work was there no longer.



Dureid Lahham

Mixing between real theatre work and dancing has caused a real problem, he said, adding that dancing only irritates feelings.

Asked whether he will quit cinema, Mr. Lahham said he would continue his cinema work, but on "a quiet fire."

He said he was now writing a film story entitled "Watani fa al Samaa" (A homeland in the heaven), which speaks about a man who lost his passport in one of the Arab airports and describes his suffering as a result Mr. Lahham said Egyptian star Adel Imam might join him in this cinema work.

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PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 Alice Au Pays Merveilles
17:30 Un Pour Tous
18:30 Montage
19:00 News in French
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:30 Black Beauty
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Bob
21:10 Murder she Wrote
22:00 News in English
22:30
Feature film: "Money for Nothing"
23:50 Home Free

PRAYER TIMES
04:08 Fajr
05:25 (Sunrise) Duha
11:26 Ouhur
14:50 Asr
17:28 Maghrib
18:45 Isha

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The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Skies will be partly cloudy with a chance of showers and winds north-westerly moderate to active. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp.
Amman 18 / 31
Aqaba 24 / 36
Dhahran 19 / 33
Jordan Valley 24 / 36
Yesterday's high temperatures:

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Amman 30, Aqaba 34 Humidity readings: Amman 33 per cent, Aqaba 39 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN: Dr. Hanna Mansour 750197
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Al Asena pharmacy 676336
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Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yaqub pharmacy 644945
Shufisani pharmacy 637652
Nijbi pharmacy 847636
IRBID: Dr. Ali Al Omari 276705
Aqaba pharmacy 854177

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Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Electricity Authority 680100
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS
AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Ann 644281/6
Aklich Maternity, J. Ann 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642342
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845045
Al-Muslime Hospital 666277/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Mubajrec 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511/26
Army, Marika 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/20
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)989090
IBRD: Princess Basma Hospital (02)275535
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
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ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
04:30 Jinkara, Singapore (RJ)
06:45 New Delhi (RJ)
09:15 Ouhuran (RJ)
09:15 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
09:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
10:00 Colombo (RJ)
10:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
15:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:50 Cairo (RJ)
18:25 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
18:25 London, Berlin (RJ)
19:30 Frankfurt (add) (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
04:20 Vienna (OA)
15:45 Rome, Larnaca (AZ)
19:40 Sanaa (Y)
19:50 Cairo (MS)
22:25 Paris, Damascus (AF)
22:25 Amsterdam (KL)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
08:45 Beirut (RJ)
07:40 Frankfurt (add) (RJ)
09:40 Ouhuran (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:35 Geneva, Brussels (RJ)
12:45 Cairo (RJ)
12:55 London (RJ)
13:30 Madrid (RJ)
14:00 Bahrain, Dubai (add)
19:45 Larnaca (RJ)
20:00 Jeddah (RJ)
20:30 Damascus (RJ)
22:25 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
23:30 London (add) (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
08:15 Beirut (MS)
12:50 Vienna (OE)
20:00 Sanaa (Y)
20:15 Cairo (MS)
22:55 Damascus, Paris (AF)

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Arr. Damascus 5:30 a.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

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Carrot 380 / 250
Cauliflower 220 / 140
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Cucumbers (small) 480 / 200
Eggplant 180 / 100
Fig 460 / 360
Garlic 900 / 500
Guava 1200 / 1000
Lemon 300 / 250
Marrow (large) 220 / 150
Marrow (small) 480 / 200
Mushrooms 150 / 80
Orange 500 / 300
Onion (dry) 280 / 150
Sweet Melon 360 / 200
Pepper (hot) 220 / 140
Pepper (sweet) 300 / 200
Potato 380 / 300
Pomegranate 360 / 200
Peaches 300 / 200
Tomato 130 / 70
String beans 750 / 600
Watermelon 70 / 50

Visiting Malaysian premier to conclude agreements, raise level of bilateral ties

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and Malaysia are expected to conclude a series of agreements during the current visit of Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad which are expected to increase the level of bilateral relations, officials said Friday.

They said senior officials from both sides were putting the final touches on the agreements, which cover trade, exchange of expertise, preferential treatment of each others' goods, encouragement of investments and cooperation in technical, scientific, cultural and religious affairs.

"It is premature to discuss the precise details of the agreements since the discussions are continuing," said Tarmidz Hashim, a senior member of the delegation accompanying the Malaysian premier, who arrived here late Thursday.

The delegation includes Deputy Foreign Minister Abdullah Fazel, Minister for International Trade Rafida Aziz, Minister of Trade and Industry Len King Yek and Minister of Tourism Sabarudin.

Mr. Mahathir visited the tomb of the late King Abdullah on Friday.

He also visited the ancient city of Petra and the Dead Sea.

The Malaysian premier, who has gained an international reputation as a tough negotiator and statesman, is scheduled to begin official talks here on Saturday.

His Majesty King Hussein



Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad (second from right) Friday recites verses of the Koran while paying respects at the tomb of King Talal. Tourism Minister Mohammad Adwan is standing next to Dr. Mahathir (Petra photo)

is expected to receive Mr. Mahathir, who is on his first visit to Jordan as Malaysian prime minister.

Also expected to figure high in Mr. Mahathir's talks here are means to increase Malaysian imports from Jordan, establishing joint projects, and diversification of trade.

At present Jordanian exports to Malaysia include phosphates and potash, medicine, vegetables, fruits and garments, while the Kingdom imports Malaysian wood, rubber, vegetable oil and coconuts and related products.

Possible joint ventures under consideration include a vegetable oil processing plant, maritime transportation, garments, electronics

and fertilisers. Also being studied are industries that depend on local raw materials, phosphates and potash in Jordan's case.

Jordan and Malaysia, both members of the Jeddah-based Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), are also seeking to increase cooperation in religious affairs, including Awqaf Affairs, Zakat, pilgrimages to Saudi Arabia, religious preaching and instruction and an Islamic civilisation festival.

Exchanging teaching staff and extending facilities to students from both sides, student scholarships, and exchange of teaching staff, scientists and experts will also be discussed.

Jordan is also expected to give training to Malaysian

teachers at the Kingdom's institutions.

In addition, cooperation in tourism affairs, with certain emphasis on religious tourism, and airlines between the countries are also expected to be reviewed during the Malaysian premier's stay here.

Royal Jordanian, the national carrier, now flies to Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital, under an arrangement with the Malaysian airlines.

Also expected to be announced during Mr. Mahathir's visit to Jordan is a decision to establish permanent embassies in Amman and Kuala Lumpur. At present, Malaysia maintains an honorary consulate in Amman.

Government measure aims to preempt industry tax evasion

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Finance Minister Sami Gammoh said Friday a recent government decision to lower the threshold of general sales tax for some industries was aimed at preempting tax evasion mostly by manufacturers of alcoholic beverages.

According to the decision, manufacturers of certain products have to register with the Ministry of Finance's Department of General Sales Tax as potential taxpayers even if their annual sales were worth less than JD 10,000.

The General Sales Tax (GST) law, adopted in mid-1994, exempts all production facilities with an annual turnover of less than JD 100,000. In effect, the government decision brought this down to JD 10,000 and specified those industries where this lower

ceiling would apply.

"The move is mostly aimed at the alcohol and spirits industry," Mr. Gammoh told the Jordan Times on Friday. "The objective is to counter tax evasion."

The earlier provision left the door open for manufacturers with more than JD 100,000 worth of annual turnover to split into smaller units with lower turnovers and thus escape from being covered under the tax, Mr. Gammoh noted.

"There was nothing to stop a manufacturer from registering his production unit as constituting 10 or 20 different commercial entities with turnovers less than the threshold originally stipulated in the law," the minister explained.

Mr. Gammoh did not say whether the move was prompted by the discovery of specific cases of tax evasion.

In addition to alcohol and spirits, other industries

targeted in the move include cement, steel for building purposes, lubricant oils and tobacco products. The range of tax is between seven and 20 per cent.

The tax law, described by the government as part of a comprehensive tax reform package, also sets specific rates for distinctly specified products under particular categories.

The GST is part of the economic restructuring programme under way in Jordan under the supervision of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

The General Sales Tax replaced a consumption tax with took effect in 1992, but broadened the base of taxation and set a ceiling of 20 per cent compared with the 60 per cent ceiling in the consumption tax law.

The government expects to collect around JD 170 to JD 180 million annually



Sami Gammoh

through the sales tax, around the same as the consumption tax, Mr. Gammoh has said.

The second phase of the law, under its provisions, will be implemented in five years from the first phase and would involve a general value added tax system coupled with taxation of the service sector.

Moroccan trade team arrives for talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian-Moroccan Economic Committee today opens three-day meeting in Amman to discuss trade and economic relations and look into means of adjusting the balance of trade between both countries.

Edris Hatto, the Moroccan minister of industry and trade, and his Jordanian counterpart Rima Khalaf, will co-chair the committee meeting which, according to industry sources here, will include the signing of a trade agreement.

Hatto, who arrived Thursday, said that the committee, will dedicate its efforts towards increasing the volume of exchanged goods between the two countries.

He said his visit to Jordan will allow him to examine the Kingdom's progress in industry and trade and hold talks that would contribute to removing trade barriers.

Mr. Hatto said he will present Jordanian officials with the results of the Moroccan experiment in privatisation of businesses and the removal of trade restrictions with other countries.

In addition the minister said he would discuss Jordan's participation in an international economic conference due to be held in Casablanca this month with the participation of delegates from 60 nations.

Minister Khalaf and other senior officials met the Moroccan minister upon his arrival Thursday.

Police arrest suspect in vengeance killing

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police in Madaba have arrested a 22-year-old man charged with the shooting death of Mawah S.K. (65) as he left the criminal court in Jabal Hussein Thursday after testifying in a case involving the death of the suspect's father.

According to a police official, the suspect, Mohammad A.A., acted out of vengeance. He said that last Feb. 10, an argument between two Madaba families over the use of grazing lands resulted in the exchange of gunfire which claimed the life of Mohammad's father.

Thursday's shooting victim was one of the witnesses testifying in the case, the police official explained.

An eyewitness told the Jordan Times, "the victim sat in the back seat of a car, and as the vehicle began moving, a man suddenly ran towards it and started shooting at the back window."

He said that the assailant ran past him, and started shooting into the air, "so that no one would follow him, and then he disappeared around the corner."

Police said that earlier a relative of the suspect, had turned himself in claiming that he was responsible for the killing. The relative was a minor and therefore he would not be subject to the same penalties as an adult.

A police official told the Jordan Times that both men were in custody. He added that the two families involved in the feud originating in February are both under police protection until further investigation into the case.

This is the second act of vengeance to be reported in the Kingdom in the same month. On Sept. 8, a 15-year-old vendetta between two tribes left five people dead during a wedding procession. One of the five killed was a 22-year-old woman who was sitting in her ranch at the time of the incident. She was shot accidentally by a stray bullet in the crossfire.

Saudi businessman wins media company lease

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Saudi businessman and owner of Arab Radio and Television, Sheikh Saleh Kamal, has won the lease of studios and equipment of Jordan Company for Television, Radio and Cinema Production, according to Faded Faneek, head of the management committee.

In an effort to avert financial ruin, the production company announced its leasing plan in mid-September.

Sheikh Saleh's offer of \$500,000 annually was accepted and a four-year lease was approved by the management committee, following 10 days of deliberation since the closing date for the submission of bids, Dr. Faneek said Friday.

Despite the lease, technical staff will be retained and their current salaries, which

are not high, are likely to increase three-fold under Sheikh Saleh, Dr. Faneek added.

He said that there had been a second bidder in the contest, but was unable to disclose the name of the company. The offer made was too low to be considered seriously, he said.

As a result of the lease, Dr. Faneek said, the company may need restructuring, but as yet there were no concrete plans. A new board of directors will be elected in December to replace the management committee which was appointed in July to confront the company's problems.

He also said the future of the company would be considered at a later date, but for the time being majority ownership would remain in the hands of the government and government-guided agencies. Foreign loans, which have

burdened the company and largely contributed to its present state of insolvency, will remain an independent issue, said Dr. Faneek.

In an interview earlier this month with Jawad Maragheh, general manager of the production company, he expressed hope that the lease would cover the loans, which amount to JD18 million.

In a more recent interview, Mr. Maragheh acknowledged speculation regarding his resignation from the company. He declined to give reasons and would not say when he expected to leave or which company he intends to join.

The expanding Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) in London, a competitor of Sheikh Saleh's Italian-based Arab Radio and Television, is said to be among a number of com-

panies who have offered a position.

In recent years, despite aspiration of the project initiators to create production studios, production levels gradually dropped, virtually coming to a standstill. This was partly attributable to the accumulation of debts resulting from over-expenditure on equipment and construction of the building housing two 600-square-metre studios, the cost of which more than doubled the original capital.

When asked if he expected production levels to increase on account of the lease, Dr. Faneek told the Jordan Times that this would no longer be a matter of concern to the company.

It is hoped that the leasing of the studios will guide the production company into a new era of success.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Germany grants Yarmouk University JD 15,000

AMMAN — The government of the Federal Republic of Germany has granted nearly JD 15,000 for erecting a steel structure frame, covered with transparent sheets, for the courtyard of the Museum of Jordanian Heritage at Yarmouk University, according to Ingrid Liedgens, first secretary at the German embassy in Amman. Mrs. Liedgens made the announcement in a letter to Yarmouk University President Marwan Kamal, informing him also that the donation would also cover the cost of filter foils for window screening as well as two thermohygrographs.

WHAT'S GOING ON

SEMINAR AND LECTURE

Seminar entitled "Islam and Christianity" by Pastor Dr. Andreas Feldtkeller (discussing the status of Christianity in Islamic societies) at Goethe-Institut at 7:00 p.m.

Lecture in Arabic entitled "Why Implementation of the Middle Eastern System Now And How To Confront It?" by Dr. Munir Hamarneh at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

FILM

Film entitled "A Stranger At Home" at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

Ceramics exhibition by Hameed Abdul Majeed at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Two exhibitions of abstract art by Ramzi A. Sayid and Mohammad Salim at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Photography exhibition at the University of Jordan.

Fourth Amman International Book Exhibition at the International Exhibition Centre, University Road (Tel. 650601).

Exhibition of paintings by Iraqi artist Wadhah Al Ward at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art, Wasfi Tal Street (Tel. 695291).

Exhibition of digital (computer) art by Dr. Shamil Kubba, Omar Shaban, and Karam Annab at Aln Art Gallery, Wadi Saqra Street (Tel. 644451).

Exhibition of paintings by Dia Azzawi at Ab'ad Art Gallery (Tel. 862105).

Exhibition of works by Farouq Zadeh entitled "Faces, Places, and Ideas" at Goethe-Institut (Tel. 641993).

Exhibition of oil paintings by Kamal Boulata entitled "Duets, Quartets, and a Triangle" at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh. Also showing "Permanent exhibition of 56 Arab contemporary artists (Tel. 643251/2).

Exhibition by artist Nadim Mahsin at the Fresh Cultural Centre.

"The Diness Exhibit" — beginnings of photography in Jerusalem and the Holy Land at the American Center exhibition hall, Abdoun.

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مستلزمات العناية الشخصية الفائقة الجودة :



الوكلاء في الاردن الشركة العربية لصناعة الورق الصحي
للمساهمة الجيدة
هاتف : ١١٥٣٠٠ - فاكس : ١٠٥٥٧٧ - ص.ب ٣٨
عمان / الاردن

Alle Deutsche

mit ständigem Wohnsitz in Jordanien sind zu einem Empfang in der deutschen Residenz anlässlich des Tages der Deutschen Einheit eingeladen am Montag, 03. Oktober 1994, von 19.30 Uhr bis 21.30 Uhr

Plague kills 2 in New Delhi; suspected cases found in U.K.

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Two deaths from plague were reported here Friday, the first outside western India, as the discovery of suspected cases of the disease in Britain sparked fears it may have spread beyond Indian shores.

Britain's chief medical officer said eight people who recently visited India had shown possible plague-like symptoms and undergone tests. Three were cleared while results were pending from the five others.

The announcement appeared certain to exacerbate the growing international isolation India is facing following the outbreak of pneumonic plague, which has left 52 people dead and sent nearly 1,500 to hospital.

Eight more countries Friday joined the long list of nations performing compulsory medical tests on people arriving from India.

The government announced that state health secretaries would meet Saturday to come up with a comprehensive plan to prevent a further spread of the highly infectious disease.

According to the health authorities here, a total of 1,463 people in six of India's 25 states and the capital were suspected to be suffering from pneumonic plague or the less virulent bubonic variety.

Thousands of passengers were stranded in New Delhi and in Bombay after several international airlines suspended flights to and from the country because of the epidemic.

An 18-year-old boy and a five-year-old boy died of the disease Monday and Thursday at New Delhi's government-run All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), hospital spokesman B.K. Dash told AFP.

They were the first deaths in the capital from the plague, which has claimed 50 lives in the industrial city of Surat in the western state of Gujarat since Sept. 20.

Mr. Dash said the Delhi victims were both residents of the capital. He said doctors had not yet been able to establish how the victims were infected or whether they had been to Surat.

He said that a 20-year-old woman who came to the hospital Thursday with swollen glands had tested positive for bubonic plague, "but disappeared before she could be taken to the isolation ward."

The authorities have closed schools and movie theatres in New Delhi until at least Oct. 15 in a bid to contain the outbreak of plague.

At least 19 cases of pneumonic plague, which affects the lungs and is transmitted by coughing or sneezing, have been confirmed in New Delhi, where there has

been a run on pharmacies selling antibiotics.

People could be seen on the streets of the capital Friday with handkerchiefs and scarves over their noses and mouths.

Several Indian cities have been gripped by a plague panic despite official claims that the disease had been largely confined to western India and would be wiped out in about 10 days.

In London, the British government's chief medical officer Kenneth Calman said the discovery of suspected plague cases was "no cause for alarm."

"It illustrates our surveillance measures are working," he said. "If any cases of the plague are confirmed they will be treated effectively with routinely available antibiotics."

A solitary case was reported earlier from Germany but it was not confirmed.

Taiwan meanwhile suspended India-bound tour groups and beefed up barbour and airport inspections, an official said in Taipei.

Incoming ships will have to use rat-traps and barbour officials would step up checks on cargo.

Bangladesh, China, Israel, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand enforced medical checks on travellers from India and Nepal and

Malaysia halted flights to Bombay.

A batch of 1,173 Sri Lankans being repatriated by India were allowed to disembark at the port town of Trincomalee Friday but would be quarantined for a week, a health official said in Colombo.

The epidemic prompted Togolese President Gnassingbe Eyadema to cut short his trip to India Thursday and cancel visits to the Taj Mahal town of Agra, Indian officials said Friday.

Indian officials expressed concern meanwhile over the economic impact of the plague outbreak and the loss of export earnings because of the air and shipping bans imposed by Middle Eastern and Gulf states.

They branded the snapping of sea and air links by Gulf and other nations as "unwarranted" and an "overreaction" to the first outbreak of plague in India in 28 years.

Flag-carrier Air India has suspended its flights to the Gulf, where an estimated one million Indians are employed, after Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) banned planes from India.

Egypt and Yemen have also cut off flights to and from India and the UAE has stopped issuing visas to Indians.

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A doctor and nurses take care of one of the nine newly admitted plague-stricken patients in Surat Civil Hospital. The death toll from the pneumonic plague epidemic has reached 52 in western India (AFP photo)

2 killed in Milan building collapse

MILAN, Italy (R) — At least two people were killed Friday when a seven-story building collapsed after an explosion in Italy's financial capital and police said more victims might be buried beneath the rubble.

Sabino Battista, a Carabinieri paramilitary police commander at the scene, said a gas leak may have caused the blast, which brought down an entire side of the building on the junction of a main road into the city centre from the north.

"There are two deaths but maybe more because the building has collapsed onto a (snack) bar and we don't know who was inside," Mr. Battista said.

"Perhaps it was a gas leak but it's too early to be sure."

At least 60 firemen equipped with earth movers worked at the scene to search for survivors.

Initial reports said as many as 12 people were hurt. Staff at Milan's San Raffaele Hospital said three of the victims had been rushed to the hospital for emergency surgery for serious injuries.

Fire brigade officials initially said the building consisted of four storeys.

It collapsed at around 10 a.m. (0900 GMT).

"There was an enormous plume of dust going up into the sky, a strong smell of gas and absolute silence," said Enrico Gastaldi, a wit-

ness who reached the scene before police.

He said the bar, situated on a ground floor corner of the building, was normally full at the time the blast occurred.

Dust from the collapse covered cars up to 100 metres from the scene and personal belongings hung from broken floorboards poking from the rubble of the building.

Building collapses caused by gas blasts are a relatively frequent occurrence in Italy.

In July, 27 people, most of them elderly, were killed when an old people's home at Motta Visconti, about 35 kilometres southeast of Milan, was flattened by a gas blast.

Mr. Kim, head of the National Security Planning Agency, said the disease had hit the capital city of Pyongyang and halted the operation of some rail services near the southwestern port of Haegju.

Mr. Kim Duk, addressing the National Assembly here, expressed concern that there may be many victims of the outbreak, adding, without elaborating, that the North lacked the medicines to cope with it.

Vast areas around Pyongyang and the northeastern coastal city of Hamhung had also been affected, Mr. Kim said.

Earlier this week the Russian news agency, ITAR-TASS, reported from Pyongyang that the northern port of Nampo had been closed to foreigners without explanation from the authorities.

The agency quoted diplomats in Pyongyang as speculating that the closure had been forced by a cholera outbreak.

Nampo is about 45 kilometres from Pyongyang.

The exclusive Stalinist state has to date made no comment through its official media on any outbreak of disease, and Mr. Kim gave no indication of the source of his information.

But the World Health Organisation (WHO) said in Geneva Thursday that cholera was raging in eastern Europe with 112 deaths reported worldwide in the past week.

The WHO report said cholera outbreaks were believed to be more widespread than available figures showed because some countries had not identified it, or were trying to hush it up.

After his policy speech, Mr. Murayama said "it was regrettable" that the opposition MPs did not attend the session during which parliament is to deal with taxation and electoral reform bills.

A series of political reform bills, aimed at reducing corruption and reviewing electoral districts, were presented

to parliament earlier this year and are expected to go to a third reading.

Tax reform bills, including a consumption tax hike from the current three per cent to five per cent in 1997 to help offset declines in government revenue stemming from an ageing population, will be formally presented to parliament for the first time.

'Cholera rampant in N. Korea'

SEOUL (AFP) — A severe outbreak of cholera has hit North Korea, spreading throughout the country from the eastern coastal areas where it broke out in mid-September, South Korea's intelligence chief Kim Duk said Friday.

Mr. Kim, head of the National Security Planning Agency, said the disease had hit the capital city of Pyongyang and halted the operation of some rail services near the southwestern port of Haegju.

Mr. Kim Duk, addressing the National Assembly here, expressed concern that there may be many victims of the outbreak, adding, without elaborating, that the North lacked the medicines to cope with it.

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The exclusive Stalinist state has to date made no comment through its official media on any outbreak of disease, and Mr. Kim gave no indication of the source of his information.

But the World Health Organisation (WHO) said in Geneva Thursday that cholera was raging in eastern Europe with 112 deaths reported worldwide in the past week.

The WHO report said cholera outbreaks were believed to be more widespread than available figures showed because some countries had not identified it, or were trying to hush it up.

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"Nor may we forget the desirable division of roles between politics and the bureaucracy," he added in reply to continued criticism that Japan's bureaucracy is often seen as dominating politics by manipulating the political agenda.

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Former French premier probed in scandal

PARIS (Agencies) — Former French Socialist Prime Minister Laurent Fabius was placed under investigation Friday for being an accomplice to poisoning in a test of whether the government can be blamed for AIDS-tainted blood transfusions.

Judges ordered Mr. Fabius, 48, to be probed over his role in the 1985 scandal in which half of France's 2,500 haemophiliacs were infected with the AIDS virus by transfusions from state blood banks.

Mr. Fabius, whom the victims of contamination accuse of stalling in introducing tests for blood donations when he was prime minister in 1984-86, denied any guilt as he left the courthouse. "I took the decision that was needed," he told reporters.

Mr. Fabius is the highest-ranking official to be probed in the emotionally charged scandal which contributed to the Socialists' 1993 election rout. A similar investigation was opened earlier this week

into his former ministers of social affairs, Georgina Dufoux, and health, Edmond Hervé.

The three face possible charges carrying a maximum penalty of 30 years in jail. But the investigation does not automatically lead to prosecution.

More than 400 haemophiliacs have died from the tainted transfusions.

Meanwhile, embattled French Industry Minister Gerard Longuet rounded on his accusers in an interview, Friday, pledging to prove his innocence of corruption allegations over the building of his Saint Tropez villa.

As pressure continued on him to resign, Mr. Longuet told the daily Le Figaro that he would not be bound out of office by press criticism, saying it has breached his right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

But Mr. Longuet, a key supporter of the right-wing government of Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, said he would stand down if he was charged in connection with the scandal.

He said that "if it is necessary and out of respect and solidarity with Edouard Balladur, I will apply the rules which the prime minister established when he formed his government," and resign.

Mr. Longuet was accused in a leaked report by an anti-corruption magistrate to have purchased the Saint Tropez villa at below the market price in a corrupt deal.

Justice Minister Pierre Méhaignerie ordered further inquiries Monday, saying he would take a decision over charges at the end of October — a decision seen by critics as an attempt to cover up the affair.

In the Figaro interview Friday, Mr. Longuet said "if I had resigned after the judge's report, the affair would have stopped there. But a man cannot be condemned without being judged."

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Dreyfuss told London's Independent newspaper he was thrilled with the experience, and, recalling the years lost to heavy drinking and drugs, said: "Working is better than snoring."

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But soap manufacturer Colgate-Palmolive has stepped up the line "Go get water and wash this witness from your face."

Firms who match their products will be space in the play's programme, which also offers novel fund-raising projects and supporters of the theatre can sponsor the at one pound (\$1.60) second.

Murayama faces opposition boycott

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama faced a substantial opposition parliamentary boycott Friday at the opening of a 65-day extraordinary session aimed at pushing through taxation and electoral reform bills.

A total 181 opposition party members — representing more than a third of the 511-seat lower house — did not show up after failing to agree with the ruling coalition on a schedule and on securing key positions in Diet committees.

It was the first time in 28 years that Japanese opposition parties boycotted the opening of a parliamentary session.

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Indonesia bans True Lies

JAKARTA (AP) — Indonesian censors have banned a U.S. comedy-action film, True Lies, after some Muslim leaders said it insults Islam.

The film, which had been playing to full houses for the past two weeks, will be pulled out of theatres Saturday, Sockanto, executive director of the Film Censorship Board, told reporters Friday.

Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, True Lies is about an American hero's fight against a Middle Eastern terrorist group called the Crimson Jihad. Jihad, an Arabic term meaning "true fighter," is often used in Islamic countries to describe a crusade.

The usage in the film had offended some Muslim leaders here. "If the film is allowed to continue, it is feared that it might destabilise and sow disharmony in society," said Mr. Sockanto.

Richard Dreyfuss directs Hamlet

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U.S.: Serbia still supplies Bosnia Serbs

SEVILLE, Spain (R) — The United States said Friday that it thought Serbia had not fully kept its promise to cut off all supplies to Bosnia's rebel Serbs and that some supplies were still getting across the border.

U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry made the remarks at a news conference following a meeting of NATO defence ministers in this southern Spanish city.

Meanwhile, Bosnian Serbs accused the United Nations Friday of siding with their enemies and vowed to keep blocking relief operations in their domain until they got equal treatment.

Momcilo Krajisnik, president of the separatist Serbs' self-styled parliament, said the leadership hoped to meet commanders of the U.N. Protection Force Saturday to reestablish a working relationship.

Serb forces have grounded a U.N. airlift to the mostly Muslim capital Sarajevo with gunfire and halted U.N. aid convoys elsewhere since NATO jets bombed a Serb position and U.N. sanctions against the Serbs were stiffened last week.

A meeting between the JNPROFOR commander and Bosnian Serb leaders due to have been Thursday to try to reopen the airport was cancelled without explanation.

"We are dissatisfied with JNPROFOR's behaviour and our relations came under review especially after Serb positions were bombed," Mr.

Krajisnik, part of the Bosnian Serbs' ruling trioka, told the independent Serbian News Agency, Beta.

Mr. Krajisnik said the Bosnian Serbs' condition for lifting the convoy blockade would be for UNPROFOR to treat the Serbs just as they did their Muslim and Croat foes.

He accused UNPROFOR of supporting Serb adversaries, an allusion to U.N. aid deliveries to mostly Muslim enclaves like Sarajevo from which government troops have attacked Serb forces recently despite a U.N. ban on heavy fighting there.

"We cannot at this moment treat the humanitarian needs of our foes with kindness," said Mr. Krajisnik, a leading hardliner.

He complained that UNPROFOR had never complained about deficient aid deliveries to Serb civilians but did so whenever Muslim enclaves were suffering shortages.

The U.N.'s main relief agency denies favouring Muslim over Serb territories in Bosnia, saying they receive roughly equal amounts of aid if convoys are allowed to run normally.

U.N. aid convoys serve both the 70 per cent of Bosnia held by Serbs and government enclaves scattered within that area, U.N. aid officials say the Serbs are effectively denying aid to their own civilians with the blockade.

"UNPROFOR is equally

important for us and Muslims. But it is inadmissible for us to treat the U.N. as a friend while it is passing resolutions against us," Mr. Krajisnik said.

The U.N. Security Council quarantined Bosnian Serb territory from the outside world a week ago to punish them for their refusal to yield a third of their territory for a big power peace plan.

At the same time, the Council began to ease sanctions against Serbian-led rump Yugoslavia as a reward for cutting off military and financial aid to the Bosnian Serbs.

Mr. Krajisnik said the Security Council crackdown as well as NATO threats to step up bombings against Serbs with UNPROFOR's approval would only prolong Bosnia's ethnic war.

"The hard line of our foes and mediators who sided with them has to change so that we can reach a solution. Insisting on these maps will lead to a resumption of war."

He welcomed a reported French initiative at the U.N. General Assembly in New York for a summit of Presidents Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, Franjo Tudjman of Croatia and Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia to work out a peace deal.

"But without the participation of the three sides in Bosnia (itself) this problem cannot be solved. Mr. Izetbegovic would not be the sole representative of Bosnia," Mr. Krajisnik said.

Yeltsin leaves Ireland after health scare

SHANNON, Ireland (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin left Ireland for Moscow Friday after a brief stopover in which he missed a meeting with Irish Prime Minister Alberto Reynolds and remained on his plane because he was what a Russian official described as "extremely tired."

Mr. Reynolds said after meeting instead with Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovetz that Mr. Yeltsin had remained aboard his aircraft on the orders of Mr. Yeltsin's doctors who said it would be better for him not to get off the plane.

"He suffers from high blood pressure," said Mr. Reynolds. "When a man is ill, a man is ill."

Mr. Reynolds added that he did not feel snubbed by the Russian president's failure to meet with him.

A Dublin government spokesman said they had been told that Mr. Yeltsin had been sick and asleep aboard his plane, which arrived here an hour late from the United States.

Mr. Reynolds and his wife had been waiting 20 minutes on a red carpet on the tarmac to greet Mr. Yeltsin when the plane's door finally opened and Mr. Soskovetz descended to explain the Russian president was "extremely tired" after his 17-hour flight from the United States.

Mr. Soskovetz met with Mr. Reynolds for about 30 minutes and offered no further explanation afterwards for Mr. Yeltsin's failure to appear.

Mr. Reynolds said he and Mr. Soskovetz had discussed a number of issues including the Northern Ireland peace process.

"I asked that a progress report should be relayed to President Yeltsin," Mr. Reynolds added.

Mr. Yeltsin arrived from the U.S. where he had held a summit with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington.

Aid workers evacuated as 'bandits' take over Rwandan refugee camp

GOMA, Zaire (AFP) — Eight foreign aid workers were evacuated Friday after "bandits" who have taken control of a Rwandan refugee camp in Zaire, the UNHCR said.

Some of the 80 international staff working in Katala camp were moving north towards the Ugandan border, while those in the southern sector of the sprawling settlement were returning to Goma, spokeswoman Lynall Sachs for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told AFP.

The UNHCR has called on the Zairean authorities to help restore order in the camp, home to 270,000 refugees, where two people have been killed in factional violence in the past two days.

"We believe the threats were serious enough to put aid workers' lives in danger," Ms. Sachs said. "But we want to get back into the camp as

soon as possible to continue caring for the vulnerable — the elderly, women and children."

The UNHCR would give no details of who the "bandits" in Katala camp were, but Western observers here believe they are members of the mainly-Hutu militias responsible for massacres of Tutsis in Rwanda.

They say the militias are involved in rape and pillage in the crowded camp and want control over the distribution of food.

A group of around 150 young men were seen moving through Katala early Friday and the numbers swelled throughout the day until the aid workers were evacuated.

"The bandits are completely in control of the camp," Ms. Sachs said.

The events at Katala are the most serious of a spate of incidents over the past few days in the camps around Goma which house a total of

800,000 refugees.

On Thursday, aid workers pulled out of Kitoko camp when refugees threatened to take hostages if more food was not provided after a hitch in supplies delivered by the Caritas relief organisation.

The UNHCR told the refugees they would be given 48 hours to think about their position during which time no food would be delivered to the camp of some 12-15,000 people.

Aid workers have long pressed for some kind of international peacekeeping force in Goma's volatile camps, and reliable sources here say that President Mobutu Sese Seko made a formal request to the U.N. Thursday for such a force to be deployed.

Meanwhile, the U.N. Friday began assessing the risks of moving up to 30,000 defeated Rwandan soldiers from the camps in an effort to improve security.

The head of a delegation of top U.N. military officers and Zairean government officials, Brig-Gen. Henry Anyidoho, deputy commander of U.N. forces in Rwanda (UN-AMIR), said Mr. Mobutu's government had asked for foreign help to move the soldiers.

Apart from the fact that they intimidate civilians into refusing to return to Rwanda, there are persistent reports that they are planning a new offensive to restart a civil war against the Rwandan Patriotic Front, which seized power in Kigali.

The U.N. would like to see them moved away from the border, some 200 kilometres deeper into Zaire.

But U.N. special representative to Rwanda, Sharyar Khan, has acknowledged in a report to Secretary-General Boutros Ghali that attempts to move the troops could spark violence.

Pakistan opposition wants new elections

KARACHI (R) — Pakistani opposition leader Nawaz Sharif, pressing his campaign against the 11-month-old government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, Thursday demanded fresh elections.

Mr. Sharif made the demand in a speech to a crowd of a few thousand people in central Karachi at the end of an on-motorcade drive after authorities lifted a ban on his entry into the country's commercial capital.

Smaller crowds turned out and anti-government marches over town, witnesses said. Government spokesman called the protest a failure.

"People are determined to remove this government and have fresh elections," Mr. Sharif said in his speech.

Mr. Sharif accuses the government of corruption and inefficiency and Thursday's protests followed his train journey across the country and a partially-heeded call for general strike earlier this month to whip up his anti-Bhutto campaign.

Ms. Bhutto, in turn accuses opposition politicians of agitating to save themselves from charges of financial corruption dating to the time when Mr. Sharif was prime minister for 30 months until

last July.

"They may have 10 train marches, they may go on strikes 10 times but they will have to submit before law and account for their plunder," Ms. Bhutto said in a speech Thursday at the Sind province town in Larkana.

On Tuesday, the Sind provincial government hanged Mr. Sharif and five other opposition politicians from entering the volatile province for 10 days until Oct. 7.

But the authorities said they had lifted the ban before Mr. Sharif, who had vowed to defy it, flew into Karachi from his home town Lahore.

Rebels besiege Chechen capital, issue ultimatum

MOSCOW (AFP) — Opposition forces in the rebel Caucasus Republic of Chechnya claimed Friday to have surrounded the capital and warned they would storm the city unless President Dzhokhar Dudayev surrendered immediately.

Eight people were killed when anti-Dudayev forces backed by helicopters attacked the airport outside Grozny, according to officials and journalists, who said the airport terminal and runway were damaged in the assault.

Mr. Dudayev however denied that the capital was under siege and said he had been given no ultimatum by his opponents, ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

"It's a blatant lie," the report quoted Mr. Dudayev as saying.

Opposition leaders quoted in news agency reports said the ultimatum was for 1530 GMT Friday.

"If Dudayev does not surrender in the next few hours, opposition forces will take the Chechen capital by storm," TASS quoted Russian

Martagov, spokesman for the opposition Provisional Council, as saying.

Other spokesmen for the two main opposition factions, quoted by Russian news agencies, said their troops had attacked the airport but Mr. Dudayev asserted the attack was carried out by Russian military forces.

Mr. Dudayev described the attack on the airport as "internationally unprecedented" and an aide was quoted by Interfax News Agency as saying it was an "open aggression by Russia against the sovereignty of Chechnya."

There was no immediate comment from Moscow on the latest developments in the rebel republic, but Russia has previously insisted it would not be drawn militarily into the conflict in Chechnya.

Moscow has however openly supported Mr. Dudayev's opponents and one of them, Ruslan Khasbulatov, the former Russian parliament speaker, said Friday that the Chechen leader's

removal from power was imminent.

"The hour is at hand for liberation from the darkness of Dudayev, from three shameful years of his leadership," Mr. Khasbulatov said in a statement released at his stronghold in Tolstoy-Yurt and reported by Russian news agencies.

Mr. Dudayev, a former general and strategic bomber pilot in the Soviet Air Force, was elected president of Chechnya in October 1991, when he also declared the tiny, oil-rich Muslim republic independent from Russia.

Russia has since tried and failed to bring the republic back under its control with methods ranging from troop deployment to an economic and transport blockade which remains in force.

Movlen Salamov, an advisor to Mr. Dudayev, told AFP by telephone that the helicopters which attacked the airport had taken off from a Russian military base in the neighbouring republic of North Ossetia.

Chechen rebel forces had

not previously been thought to possess military helicopters but another key opposition leader, Umar Avturkhanov, said in a newspaper interview published Friday that he had recently acquired them.

Mr. Avturkhanov told the liberal daily Sevodnya that opposition forces had recently purchased several Mi-8 transport helicopters as well as Mi-24 attack helicopters known as "Crocodiles."

Mr. Dudayev aides meanwhile reported clashes between government troops and opposition forces in other parts of the republic, including the region of Mad-turechny, stronghold of the opposition Provisional Council.

A spokesman for the Chechen "national security department," quoted by TASS, said opposition helicopters also shelled the village of Bratskoye and added that one of them was shot down by troops loyal to Mr. Dudayev.

There were no reports of casualties from those clashes.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.
 جردان تايمز يومية عربية سياسية مستقلة منشورة بالانجليزية من المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. تأسست 1975.

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
 MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
 MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
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Editorial and advertising offices:
 Jordan Press Foundation.

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephone: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Basic factors

THE PROPOSAL by some right-wing factions within the ruling Labour Party that calls for a minimum of seventy Knesset votes in support for any Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights before any such withdrawal can be agreed to threatens to undermine the entire Syrian-Israeli track simply because it is virtually impossible for Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to muster such a wide Knesset support.

Given the posture of the Likud on the issue of withdrawal from the Syrian territory occupied in 1967 and "annexed" in 1981 and the support that it has been receiving from right-wing groups within the Labour Party, Mr. Rabin is forced to strike a delicate balance between domestic politics and the urgent need to negotiate seriously with Damascus.

Syria has shown greater flexibility in its peace talks with Israel when Mr. Rabin made overtures to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad that promises to trade all the Syrian territory on the Golan Heights in return for complete peace with Syria. No wonder Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres is alarmed about the dangers that lie ahead should the Knesset adopt the 70 votes requirement. It goes without saying that pulling the rug from under the feet of Mr. Rabin at this critical juncture in the Israeli-Syrian peace talks could rock the boat for the whole peace process in the Middle East.

The Likud leadership and their sympathisers on the issue of the Golan Heights should realise that playing domestic politics with the Golan Heights could undo everything that was painstakingly done on all the other fronts. There is no way that the viability of the other tracks could be maintained for long if Damascus is recklessly kept out of the peace equation. There is no surer way of pouring cold water on the Syrian front than to send one message after the other that Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights is not in the cards. Damascus has already rejected the notion that Israel conduct a referendum on its impending agreement to vacate the Syrian territory as a manoeuvre that threatens to inject local politics in the negotiating process. There could be no doubt that Damascus would equally see in the new proposal nothing but a plot to keep the peace talks with it out in the cold. Let's not forget that whereas there can be no war in the area without Egypt, it is equally true that there can be no peace in the region without the Syrians. Rabin may have to keep his eyes focused on the next general elections scheduled now for 1995 but he would be better advised to concentrate on the peace process in all its tracks as a surer way to win reelection for himself and his party.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Sawt Al Shaab daily criticised voices that call on Arab states to end their boycott of Israel, which continues to occupy Arab lands and refuses to recognise the Palestinian people's rights. Shafiq Obeidat said that ever since the start of the peace process in Madrid, the Arab states have been subjected to pressure to end their boycott of Israel and normalise their relations with the Jewish state. Of course, the Arabs want to reach peace with Israel and seek a lasting settlement but not before the return of the usurped lands and other rights, said the writer. He said ending the boycott means normalising relations with Israel before it has pulled out its forces from Arab territories in implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, on which the Madrid conference was based and on which the whole peace process is based. How can the Arabs respond to the calls for ending the boycott while Israel scoffs at the world community's resolutions and disregards the Palestinians' rights to their own homeland, asked the writer. While the Arabs are asked to end the boycott and normalise their relations with the Jewish state, said the writer, the Israelis are allowed to compile mass destruction weapons meant to enable Israel to consolidate its occupation of the Arab lands.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour proposed that the concerned authorities set up a specialised training institute to retrain drivers and motorists who were involved in accident and make it imperative that they pass the institute's tests before they are allowed to drive on the roads again. The writer, Ahmad Taha, also suggested that a special office be set up to receive remarks and complaints from people about reckless drivers who violate the law on the road so that they can be deterred. Noting that the number of casualties on the roads was rising every year, the writer said, the police could withdraw the driving licence of people involved in major accidents and can impose other penalties through the courts and declare the names of the violators. The writer said that penalties on reckless drivers should serve as a deterrent to others.

Jordan Perspective

Putting the process back on track

By Dr. Musa Kellani

THE SUMMIT held between His Majesty King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Tuesday and statements issued after the meeting at Aqaba clearly put to rest speculation fuelled by Israeli reports that Jordan and Israel were poised to declare if not sign a peace agreement when His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan meets with Israeli Foreign Minister Peres in Washington on Oct. 3.

For one thing, many appeared to have been taken in by the Israeli claims that the two sides had even drafted a peace accord. The fact of the matter, as we are given to understand, is that the Israelis had drawn up their own version of a peace agreement and sent it to Jordan. This was the main basis for the Israeli reports that a "finishing" touches were being put to the draft.

Israelis are free to draw up any document they want, but it does not mean that it is binding on Jordan (or anyone else for that matter) and that there is an agreement.

As we also understand, King Hussein has turned down the draft since it does not satisfactorily address Jordan's demands for its territorial and water rights. As usual, Israel appears to be repeating that agreement should be on making available more water rather than reaching an acceptable formula for sharing what is available today.

In any event, it is clear now that Jordan and Israel have not reached the stage where discussions could focus on how, when and where to sign a peace accord.

Thursday's Aqaba summit should also serve as a reminder to those who talk about "secret" Jordanian-Israeli talks. One fails to see why the tag "secret" should be attached to Jordanian-Israeli contacts.

After all, the highest leadership from both sides have met and signed a declaration ending 46 years of belligerency between the two countries and set out a framework for negotiations on the issues of core disputes with a view to arriving at a peace accord. Definitely, nobody can argue that any accord could be reached without direct contacts between the two parties concerned.

It should also be recalled that the Washington Declaration of July 25 clearly called for meetings such as the Aqaba summit whenever necessary. All meetings between Jordanian and Israeli officials should be seen in the context of the Washington Declaration, regardless of whether meetings

were held in public or otherwise. It is the prerogative of the two parties concerned to decide whether to allow the media access to the meetings. Holding negotiations away from the media limelight does not indicate that the meetings were "secret" although some might suggest that it deprives the people of the right to know. But then, the intricacies of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the politics of the Middle East are such that quiet diplomacy and negotiations are sometimes the best means to arrive at concrete results.

The emphasis that the King and Mr. Rabin made in their Aqaba meeting on the necessity to exert accelerated efforts to reach more progress on all issues between Jordan and Israel underlines the fact that the two sides might have made progress in the thorny issues of territorial and water rights but not to an extent that a "dramatic breakthrough" could be announced at the White House meeting on Oct. 3.

That also indicates that despite the reports of "significant" progress and "closed gaps," Israel might still be hanging on to its strategy of stalling on issues and not moving ahead fast enough in concrete terms to address some of the key concerns of Jordan.

The Aqaba summit was also a major effort by Mr. Rabin to convince Jordan of the Israeli interpretation of the political wisdom in signing an initial document and then negotiating the details of the documents.

Jordan has repeatedly made it clear that it is not willing to go along with the Israeli anxiety to get its own version of a peace accord signed by the Kingdom.

Having pressed Jordan from the very outset of the peace process to endorse a "peace agreement and then negotiate its terms," Israel now appears to be in the second phase of that effort — "a preliminary" agreement and then negotiations.

That is not to say that the Jordanian-Israeli negotiations are bogged down or deadlocked. We have seen the two sides establish committees with clear-cut mandates to seek agreements based on unambiguous terms of reference, whether in the context of territory or water. Those committees are reported to have progress, but the problem appears to Israeli reluctance to relinquish parts of Jordanian land in the south as well as the small 800-dunum strip in the north and to recognise and accept the Kingdom's

right to a fair share of the waters of the Jordan and Yarmouk rivers.

The water dispute is the thorniest. The Israeli argument is that it is facing a water shortage and as such it could not really meet the Jordanian demand. The Israelis also accuse upstream Syria for diverting more than its share of waters. But that argument could not get us anywhere at this point in time.

What is the logic in the Israeli stand that it is facing a water shortage and could not meet the Jordanian demand when it is an established fact that the per capita consumption of water in Israel is three times that of Jordan?

We Jordanians find ourselves facing severe water crisis almost on a daily basis, but we know very well that a good part of our water problems could be solved if Israel agrees to the principle of fair sharing. If we are to accept Israel's argument of water shortage for Israel's, then that "fair sharing" means a reduction in the per capita water consumption in Israel and an increase in Jordan. But then isn't it our right to have an increased water supply? Why should we sacrifice our right so that the Israelis could continue to get uninterrupted supply of water while we are subjected to water rationing and erratic supplies?

After all, the very essence of the Washington Declaration is coexistence based on respect of each other's legitimate rights. If Israel has its own interpretation of what those "legitimate rights" are, then, we are sorry to say, then we are on the wrong track altogether.

In that vein, all the talks about "date and timetables" for Israel withdrawal from the occupied Jordanian lands and would not make much sense unless accompanied by a similar agreement on fair allocations of water. As far as one could judge, this was the message that His Majesty gave to Mr. Rabin in Aqaba on Thursday.

Hopefully, the results of the Aqaba summit would rectify the situation and put us all in the right track towards advancing the peace process on meaningful terms. And the White House meeting between Crown Prince Hassan and Mr. Peres would be another stepping stone based essentially on Israeli recognition and acceptance of the realities of the Jordanian position.



M. KAHIL

THE WEEK IN PRINT

There can be no peace unless rights in land, water are secured

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

ALL EYES will be turned to Washington this week to watch for the outcome of Monday's meeting between His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and the Israeli Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres, said Al Ra'i daily. Jordan will, of course, be seeking to see success of its endeavours to regain its lost territory and water rights in accordance with the Washington Declaration of July 25, and Israel, for its part, is invited to respond favourably to Jordan's legitimate demands, said the paper. The fact that the U.S. president will be sponsoring the Monday meeting, means that the U.S. administration is pursuing its efforts to help the two parties to reach a settlement, said the paper.

Al Dustour discussed the same theme and said the Jordanian borders with Israel, Jordan's lost territory and water rights will figure high on the agenda of the meeting. The paper warned that unless Israel is fully committed to give Jordan back its rights, there can be no peace and normalisation of relations. It would be interesting to watch for results from the coming meeting, said the paper, especially as the Jordanian-Israeli talks so far have achieved practically nothing.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i, called on the Arab states involved in the peace process, especially Jordan and Palestine, not to give up coordination. Separate talks with Israel could end up in several overlapping agreements, said the writer, who stressed that the concerned Arab parties ought to re-

move any lingering differences in views. The writer said cool relations among Arab states would by no means help them to regain their lost rights.

In the view of Ahmad Misleh, a writer in Al Ra'i, two obstacles laid by Israel are still delaying an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The first is the Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab lands and the second lies in Israel's continued threats to launch war and to practice it in Lebanon and against the Palestinians, said Ahmad Misleh.

The building of settlements means that the Israelis have no intention of returning the land to its lawful owners and the war on the Palestinians and the Lebanese means Israel has not stopped its attempts to expand its lands and repress the resistance, said the writer.

Salah Qallab, a columnist in Al Dustour, focused on the general conditions in the self-rule areas of Gaza and Jericho, saying that their inhabitants are deprived of the requirements of stability and development.

The two areas lack proper institutions that can manage their affairs and infrastructure for social and economic services, said the writer. The Israelis are laying one obstacle after another in the way of the Palestine National Authority, preventing it from introducing reform or carrying out vital socio-economic projects after leaving the two areas in ruins following 27 years of occupation, said the writer.

Another Al Dustour columnist said that the time is not yet ripe for culture and

other forms of normalisation of relations with Israel. Fakhri Salch said he is astonished to see some Arab intellectuals responding favourably to Israeli calls for dialogue or discussion of issues of mutual concern at a time when the Israeli society still harbours deep hatred towards the Arab Nation. He said Israel cannot expect to win the Arab Nation's favour while upholding racist slogans and continuing to occupy Arab lands in total disregard to U.N. resolutions.

Salameh Ekour a writer in Sawt Al Shaab, described as a positive step a decision by the Arab League to discuss the prospect of reducing the sanctions on Iraq. But the writer said that placing conditions on Iraq for opening such discussion would not be helpful and could backfire. He suggested that an Arab summit be held urgently to deal with this issue and end the suffering of the Iraqi people without placing conditions on Iraq, which has complied with all U.N. conditions.

In the view of Mohammad Mahasneh, another writer in Sawt Al Shaab, it has become clear that Russia, China and France have not succeeded in ending the embargo on Iraq and that the United States has the final say in this matter. The writer said that for its part, the United States wants the largest piece of the cake and is trying to ensure that it is guaranteed favourable terms before the sanctions can end.

Ahmad Dabbas, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily, described as a hasty

decision by the government to raise the price of state supplied water for irrigation in the Jordan Valley. The writer said while understanding the Jordan Valley Authority's present difficulties concerning the cost of water supply operations, the hike in the price of water was bound to cripple crop production.

Taking uncalculated decisions and disregarding the views of the farmers can by no means serve the agricultural sector, he added.

Mohammad Subeini, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that the government should realise that water is a vital component for agricultural production and that the farmers who have shouldered the burden paying for expensive seeds, fertilisers and pesticides are expecting help rather than additional burdens from the government.

Mohammad Daoud, a writer in Al Dustour, focused on the constant shortage of medicines in government hospitals, stressing that such situation continues to impede doctors' work and make things more difficult for the needy patients who cannot afford to buy medicines from drug stores. There is no doubt that the health ministry continues to allocate sufficient funds for the purchase of medicines but failure by some officials to ensure fast delivery of stocks in hospitals is the cause for this situation. He urged the health ministry to take effective measures to secure the needed medicine and to arrange sufficient stocks to be available for emergency cases.

LETTERS

How to solve traffic problems

To the Editor:

YOUR EDITORIAL "in the Middle We Walk" (Jordan Times, Sept. 27) brings to light several interesting points: The narrowing sidewalk, marking traffic lanes and hazardous pedestrian crossing.

In the first two cases, the evolutionary law of use and abuse is brought to mind. Even where sidewalks are clear of obstacles, debris and cars, and are four to five metres wide, pedestrians, especially along major thoroughfares, opt to walk near to the middle of the road as they can. Honking motorists receive scowls of remarks of questionable vocabulary. Solution: A) Put sidewalks in the middle of the road, or B) Eliminate sidewalks altogether, since they are not used anyway!

Many motorists apparently believe that the white line markers hold a magic force, which if they straddle without deviation, will guide them safely to the destination or take your half in the middle!

At stop lights the rule is "make a lane for yourself." So why the paint, the fancy buttons and directing arrows? It looks great, but does it work?

Having policemen assist pedestrians to cross busy intersections at peak hours is an excellent solution. During "off" hours they can then ticket violators at well posted zebra crossings for pedestrians, notably along Garden St. (Wadi Tel St.), Salt Road and Wadi Saqra Road. In many countries, it is a serious offense to fail to yield to pedestrians in the marked crossing; however, pedestrians should be fined for not using the crosswalks — i.e. laywalking!

The solutions do not lie on the beads of past or present mayors of Amman, traffic police, or highway designers. There is an impossible task that will continue to mushroom as Jordan's population grows. The answer cannot come from higher up but from within ourselves.

Mrs. M. Annab, Amman.

Sad stories from Iraq

To the Editor:

IT IS very disheartening to hear the stories our people bring back from their visits to Iraq. We all know how the men, women and children of Iraq live. Most of us are ready to help in any way. However, a few of us, actually I think if I really want them to be part of us, exploit the plight of our people and brothers in Iraq.

For a Jordanian to go to Baghdad and spend JD 100 in 10 days is not so awful a thing to do and may seem normal, until you do a simple calculation and figure out that this person actually spent 100,000 Iraqi dinars, and don't forget we are still talking about the five days, which comes to 20,000 Iraqi dinars a day. Just tell me how you would feel in Amman if some Iraqi individuals start to spend 20,000 Jordanian dinars a day.

It shames me that any one wants to do something like this anywhere on earth. It shames me even more anyone from Jordan wants to do it in Iraq.

It is beyond my comprehension how many of us are like this behaviour and accept it. It is a tragedy if we can live with such an act and continue to look the other way.

It may be imperative for the authorities in Jordan intervene to stop this continuing violation of the dignity of the Iraqi people on the hands of a few individuals.

Emile Haddad, Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Crown Prince: Substantive bilateral issues are on the verge of resolution

'Allowing the current prevailing conditions to govern future economic relations is a clear-cut recipe for failure'

Following is the full text of an address by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan at The John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. The address, entitled "Prospects for Successful Regional Economic Cooperation," was delivered on behalf of Prince Hassan by information Minister Jawad Anani on Sept. 29.

ALLOW ME first to start by thanking you for your kind invitation and to directly proceed to the subject matter.

The Middle East peace negotiations have developed their own distinct nature. At the outset, they seemed to be governed by balances of power, outcomes of wars and a legacy of enmity that has lasted for 45 years. The negotiators initially addressed their task with categorical positions and insistence on what they viewed as their respective and well entrenched rights. The fact that the negotiations outlasted the gloomy expectations of their failure created a unique environment, with its own dynamics. In this regard, we can draw an analogy between the negotiating milieu and the stock exchange. The status of the companies whose shares are traded influences the pattern of trade. But more importantly, trade is influenced by the behaviour of the trader in the market and whether they decide to be bullish or bearish. The external forces influencing progress in the negotiating rooms were to a great degree generated by the negotiating process itself. This chain action and reaction served as a benevolent factor in giving the peace process its own integrity. Degrees of freedom with which negotiators could work increased over time and the process generated its own built-in flexibility. This appears to be more reflective of the situation in both the Jordanian and the Palestinian tracks of the

Middle East peace negotiations.

Such a trend has only recently begun to characterise the other tracks. This is why I would say that we can describe the on-going peace process as business-like. The persons involved are now more focused and they have developed the deep sense of urgency to succeed.

On the Jordanian track, we feel that substantive bilateral issues are on the verge of resolution. The multilateral aspects are still lagging behind. This asymmetry is a result of the way negotiations were originally structured. The undertaking of outstanding issues bilaterally could not have achieved the comprehensiveness needed. Consequently, we have to develop the proper mechanisms which can accommodate the effective handling of comprehensive issues.

I shall invoke specific examples to elucidate my theme. Numerous ideas and scenarios have been proposed for future regional economic cooperation. None of these scenarios, to the best of my knowledge, is thoroughly convincing. They address the issue in a rather abstract form without grasping the real world intricacies which could prove to be the eventual determining factor for the success or failure of such options. I believe that a conceptual framework is urgently needed, without which we would be distracted in the maze of ideas, individual interests and personal visions, which

together do not add up to something of real value. Future regional economic cooperation cannot be oblivious to existing disparities. Some analysts even construct an entire vision based on the fact that such disparities make cooperation worth everybody's while. The assumptions made in this sort of economic capilarity are that the poor benefits from the externalities of the rich and the latter make an economic rent out of dealing with the poor.

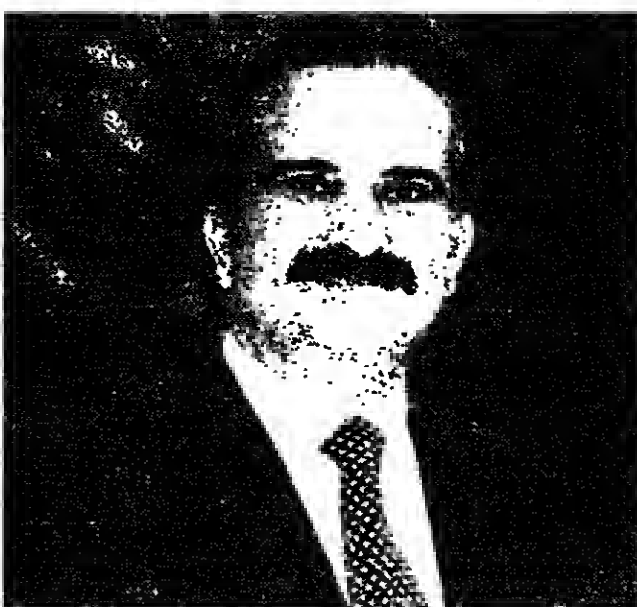
Let us place such theory to the test and find out whether it has succeeded. The Arab World countries during the oil boom era thought that they could realise economic integration through the exchange of money for labour. This factor exchange model proved to be a failure because it has not produced the expected trade flow of goods and services. Moreover, labour movement proved to be most precarious as we have seen thousands of labourers thrown out overnight from host countries with the tacit approval of the international community whose statutes clearly oppose such actions. Goods can be easily barred from entry by a sudden decision committed to spite others for political reasons. Israel, for instance, has quite often used its employment of Palestinian labour for political leverage, even after the declaration of principles and the Cairo agreement. Such volatility in behaviour cannot characterise future economic patterns if we are intent on creating long lasting cooperation. Allowing the current prevailing conditions to govern future economic relations is a clear-cut recipe for failure. The question is: What are the missing ingredients that we need to guarantee future success in this field? Firstly,

I shall start with the obvious. We need decisions to be based on the due democratic process, and the choice to integrate must be a patient process based on grassroots acceptance and eventual commitment. Ivory tower decisions from the world of academia and high level decision-makers are a recipe for short lived endeavours. It is people who will be affected and they will be the ultimate judge and determinant of the final outcome. Political decisions in the absence of a democracy can be easily outweighed by people's economic abstention, or hesitation.

Democracy in this case is not treated metaphorically; it is, rather, a real life concept which derives its strength from the observance of people's interests.

The second condition is respect for human rights. People in a regional profile must be allowed to move, transact, invest, transfer and interact. The fruits of their labour should not go unheeded or stay subject to political whims. They are entitled to security and the right to plan ahead in a transparent world. They cannot be victimised by ambiguous security concerns or threatened by rejection and expulsion. They must enjoy laissez passer, laissez-faire.

The third prerequisite is symmetry. People must be allowed to compete in a world as close as possible to perfect competition. The rules of the game which they must cope with on the two sides of any divide should be similar and compatible. Any member country in a regional cooperation arrangement should not be privileged by special rules which would give it a degree of monopolistic power over other partners. In this regard, I dare even



to say that we should allow a certain degree of asymmetry in favour of the weaker party until it reaches the stage where it graduates to symmetry. We can derive a lesson from the European Union, where the poorer and less developed countries were boosted to a comparable stage of economic growth. They were also granted privileges and subsidies well after they acquired their membership.

The fourth factor is building regional institutions which would maintain their regional identity throughout. The sad experience of certain regions, particularly in the Arab World, tells us that such institutions failed to realise their objectives and eventually slipped into bankruptcy, because their decisions lacked independence and were not based on objective criteria. Their decisions were basically coloured either by host countries or by the larger financial contributing members. Moreover, it is imperative that the employees working in such institutions should

lose their national identity and acquire a clear-cut regional one.

The fifth element centres on the distribution of benefits and burdens, which should be just and even. While the members of regional arrangements usually focus on the benefits they expect to derive, they forget the other but equally important side of the sacrifices needed. They all want to engage in the myopic exercise of gain, trying to manoeuvre their way out of pain. There is no such arrangement where everybody gains or loses all the time. A time preference analysis should be introduced where those who gain in the early stages should stand ready to make sacrifices later on. If such a modus operandi is established, the net result would be net profit for all, which would outweigh any gains realised by individual countries in the absence of such regional arrangements.

These are the conceptual components and conditions for successful regional economic cooperation. In real

terms however, we need to pursue policies which would ensure the following:

First, the availability of financial resources is a necessary condition without which cooperation, particularly in the early stages would be impossible. I would suggest here that an early agreement on the creation of a regional development bank can go a long way, not only in pooling financial resources.

Of the members, but also in allowing extra-regional parties to contribute. Such an institution should enjoy the highest standards of competent personnel and management systems.

Secondly, we need to structure a well thought-out formula to liberalise trade and to ensure free mobility of capital, goods and people across boundaries. A plan of action should be carefully crafted allowing each member country to adopt the proper legislation and management procedures in order to cope with such mobility.

Thirdly, a careful analysis of the distribution of gains should be made. Losers must be compensated, even partially, through specially created facilities, and winners must be subjected to a tax without diluting their cooperative spirit.

Fourthly, governments of member countries should ensure a very active role for the private sector. De-governmentalisation of regional action would be the most important factor to ensure its success. Governments and inter-regional business should go hand in hand. By nature, they can easily find themselves at odds. Issues of sovereignty, independence, and viability are examples of politically loaded economic terms which become sacred cows used to alienate cooperation or to justify the lack of

it. For this to happen, non-governmental organisations and sectoral and qualitative business forums should be allowed to flourish and lead.

Fifth, it is imperative that we should agree to create an independent regional study and research centre, to be empowered with highly qualified researchers and easy access to information.

I suggest that regional parties should immediately embark on establishing such an institution which would be all encompassing in order to be the initiator of ideas and projects and the arbiter which would judge the optimality of such undertakings. Its independence and integrity are of paramount importance and its verdicts should be final.

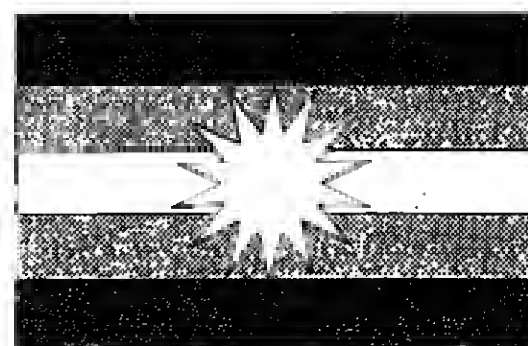
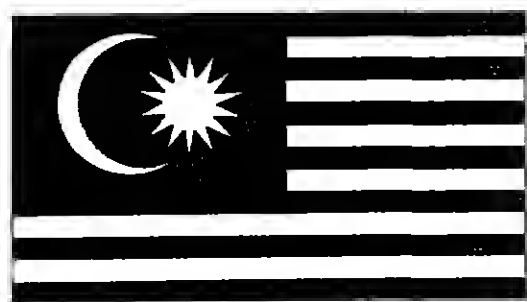
It is imperative that the peace process should work speedily on the settlement of outstanding substantive issues. As long as these issues are not resolved, they would always look unduly formidable and insurmountable.

Once they are overcome and left behind, they appear small. However, we need to cross the threshold to the wider and more complex world of economic interaction.

Its complexity emanates from the fact that it deals directly with people's mundane interests and daily livelihood.

After three years of peacemaking, we have to move to the task of peace building. This quantum leap entails gains and pains, wins and losses, failures and successes, and everything else that makes life worth living.

If the peace effort so far has been dealing with the task of resolving potential disputes and minimising the frequency of their occurrence.



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IMF says world recovery will only partly boost commodity prices

MADRID (AFP) — World commodity prices will be buoyed by the current economic upturn in industrial countries but not enough to reverse declines over the past 10 years, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) says.

"Stronger growth in industrial countries will help to relieve some of the downward pressure in commodity markets," the IMF said in a supplementary report to its half-yearly World Economic Outlook.

"But it appears unlikely

that it would be sufficient to reverse the declines of the past decade."

The IMF said an average annual growth rate of 2.5 per cent in industrial countries over the next two years — slightly below its forecast for a 2.7 per cent expansion — would boost non-oil commodity prices by between 6.5 per cent and nine per cent over the same period.

"Other factors — in particular, trends in the supply of commodities, economic developments in the former

Soviet Union and the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round — could also tend to boost commodity prices."

But the IMF warned that recent analysis suggested that real commodity prices had fallen at an average rate of 0.6 per cent since the beginning of this century, with the price of non-oil commodities relative to manufactured export prices reaching its lowest level in more than 90 years in 1992.

"Formal analysis suggests that much of the weakness is

secular, not temporary," the report said, pointing to the breakdown of the Bretton Woods exchange-rate system plus subsequent currency fluctuations and oil shocks.

The IMF said the apparent acceleration in the trend towards a decline in commodity prices over the past two decades was partly related to a secular slowdown in the growth of real output in the industrial countries.

"The declining intensity of resource use for some commodities, owing to tech-

nological change, has also reduced demand," it said.

The report also noted a "remarkable" increase in the volume of commodity imports by industrial countries which have almost doubled since 1983, a sharper increase than for imports in general.

"The increase in volume, accompanied by a decline in prices, points to the importance of supply-side factors in explaining price developments."

Factors boosting supply range from technical innova-

tions and enhanced productivity in commodity-exporting countries to agricultural policies in industrial nations which have typically stimulated output.

Other factors include increased exports by commodity producers to overcome balance of payments difficulties and the collapse of international stabilisation schemes for some commodities such as tin and coffee.

More recently, developments in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have

also depressed prices as demand for imported commodities has shrunk in line with the sharp contraction in overall demand.

The downward pressure on prices has been particularly strong for metals, of which many of the former Soviet republics are major suppliers. Exports of zinc, for example, soared 700 per cent between 1989 and 1992.

The IMF report concluded that the past two decades had highlighted the importance of

precautionary saving and hedging against commodity price swings, along with policies to diversify exports and boost productivity.

Commodity exporters successful at adapting have been "those that have used macroeconomic stabilisation policies to cope with the inevitable booms and busts rather than trying to protect private producers from price uncertainty through marketing boards or price stabilisation funds," it said.

Revamped centre to help develop Jordan's agricultural sector

By Khattab Salman
Special to the Jordan Times

BAQA — The National Centre for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer (NCARTT), a major regional agricultural centre, was formally opened Thursday by Agriculture Minister Mansour Bin Tarif

and U.S. Ambassador Wesley Egan.

NCARTT and four of its six regional agricultural service centres were constructed and equipped with USA assistance provided through the National Agricultural Development Project, a \$25.3 million nine-year effort which

began in 1986 and came to an end Sept. 30, 1994.

The minister of agriculture said in a speech on the occasion that agriculture in Jordan was traditional way of living more than a profession.

He noted that the agricultural sector contributed directly more than 10% to

the gross domestic product (GDP) and more than 28% in other agriculture-related activities.

He indicated that agricultural exports constitute 20% of Jordan's volume of exports and that more than 60 thousand people in Jordan worked in the agricultural

sector.

He added that more investments were needed in this sector to create more job opportunities, raise income and increase the area of irrigated land per capita.

"The Jordanian citizen's share of agricultural irrigated area is the lowest in the re-

gion standing at a low of 125 square metres per capita," he explained.

He said that Jordan's principle stand in insisting on acquiring fair share of water from the Yarmouk and Jordan rivers through the ongoing peace talks with Israel arises from the fact that

Jordan aims at least "to double the share of agricultural irrigated areas per capita" which still, if achieved does not place Jordan any higher on the list in the region.

Mr. Egan said in a statement at the inauguration ceremony that agriculture has traditionally been important to Jordan.

"In a recent study financed by the National Agricultural Development Project (NADP) project, the agribusiness sector... was found to contribute over 22% of Jordan's national income. Clearly the contribution of agriculture to the rest of the economy is of strategic importance," he said.

He added that agriculture in Jordan was at a critical moment as a result of increased pressure on scarce water and land resources and as a result of increased competition from other countries.

"The research to be undertaken by NCARTT here and at its regional centres will provide the technological basis for Jordanian agricultural development in the next century".... and that "further growth depends on increasing yields and more diversified production while conserving to the maximum these very limited resources," he elaborated.

Canadian dollar is quickly appreciating; Australian dollar forecast to rise

The following report, covering the period from Thursday, Sept. 22-1994 until Wednesday, Sept. 28-1994, is provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch — Dubai.

Overview

Fundamental View: Sentiment toward the dollar has recently been dominated by U.S.-Japan trade tensions, German electoral uncertainties, and prospects for further Fed tightening. If the avoids imposing trade sanctions on Japan, there could be a brief improvement in sentiment toward the dollar. But prospects for U.S. current account deficits and capital outflows to remain large relative to foreign demand for dollar assets suggest an ongoing trend toward dollar weakness.

We continue to expect the dollar to trade at DM/USD 1.50 and JPY/USD 95 in twelve months.

Japanese yen

Fundamental View: Trade talks continue to dominate sentiment towards the yen/dollar exchange rate. A successful resolution — an immediate threat of trade sanctions — would be a positive for the dollar but we would not expect that to bring about a sea-change in negative sentiment towards the dollar. An unsuccessful resolution — trade sanctions to be imposed — could put sharp downward pressure on the dollar by fuelling fears of imported inflation and dollar selling by the Japanese. Whatever the decision on sanctions, trade talks are likely to continue with relatively little impact on the existing large imbalances which are the root cause of dollar weakness.

With the U.S. bilateral trade deficit with Japan exceeding \$50 billion annually while Japan's global trade surplus is close to \$140 billion, the imbalances are expected to lead to further dollar weakness despite prospects for further interest rate hikes in the U.S. We maintain our forecast for the dollar to trade at 95 yen in the twelve months time.

Deutschmark

Fundamental View: The mark was weaker against the dollar and European crosses this week as market participants took cover following electoral results in the state of Bavaria. The poor showing of the Free Democrats, Chancellor Helmut Kohl's junior partners heightened concerns for Chancellor's Kohl's prospects in the upcoming Oct. 16 election. The market's reaction to the Bavarian election result was probably overdone, but it does underscore the fact that political concerns will be a major focus for the German market in the near-term. Barring an election catastrophe, the German market should benefit post-election as attention is again focused on economic fundamentals.

The west German economy grew 2.3 per cent year-over-year in the second quarter following 1.6 per cent increase in

the first. Data available since then points to a continued recovery, but there is no indication that the west German economy is heading towards above potential, inflationary growth. Though we raised our 1994 growth forecast to 2 per cent from 1.8 per cent, we lowered our 1995 growth forecast to 2.3 per cent from 2.5 per cent.

We still expect the mark to be trading at DM/USD 1.50 in six-to-twelve months time compared to the current exchange rate of DM/USD 1.55.

Pound sterling

Fundamental View: The British pound edged higher against the dollar this week to USD/GBP 1.58, a new high. Against the Deutschmark, the pound traded in a narrow range around DM/GBP 2.44. The pound is being supported by strong growth, better-than-expected current account data and expectations that Chancellor Kenneth Clarke is committed to containing inflation below his target rate of 4 per cent. In the second quarter, real GDP was up 1.1 per cent from the first quarter and up 3.8 per cent from a year ago. The current account deficit for the second quarter was only \$664 million, much better than consensus expectations for a \$1.3 billion deficit.

Though we do not expect another official increase in rates this year, we expect possibly two or three 50 basis point increases next year. By this time next year, we expect short and long rates in the U.K. to offer a 75 basis point premium to U.S. interest rates. Interest rates in the U.K. in twelve months should offer a 200 basis point premium to German short rates and a 200 basis point premium to German long rates.

We maintain our twelve-month forecast for the pound to trade near USD/GBP 1.63 and DM/GBP 1.45.

Australian dollar

Fundamental View: The Australian dollar returned to trading near U.S./A\$ 0.74 following a dip to U.S./A\$ 0.73. Our forecast is for the A\$ to rise toward U.S./A\$ 0.78 in twelve months due to higher commodity prices, but there is near-term risk for A\$ weakness. First, the A\$ has a seasonal trend of weakening in the second half. Second, a surge in investment demand has led to a widening of the current account deficit. We expect the current account deficit for August to widen to a monthly deficit of -A\$2 billion compared to a -A\$1.8 billion deficit for July. Furthermore, we now expect the annual current account deficits for 1994 and 1995 to be wider than previously forecasted. This widening of the current account deficit is the key risk to our A\$ forecast.

That said, other factors continue to favour strong A\$. Nominal interest rates are moving higher in Australia and we expect the 10-year government bond in Australia to offer a inflation expectations in both countries centre around 3 per cent next year, the real interest rates differential is also 325 basis points. The Reserve Bank of

Australia expected to hike short-term rates by 75-to-100 basis points in October or November. That compares to an expected U.S. Fed tightening of 50 basis points around the same time, so short-term rates in Australia should continue to offer a premium.

Swiss franc

Fundamental View: The Swiss franc rallied against the Deutschmark last week, posting another new high of S.F./DM 0.8307. Currently the franc is trading near 0.8273. Upcoming election concerns in Germany and increased signs that the Swiss economy continues to recover have helped the franc appreciate against the mark. Second quarter GDP in Switzerland rose at a 2.4 per cent rate following a first-quarter rate of 3.2 per cent. Fixed investment spending has led the recovery, while consumption and government spending has shown only modest growth. The external sector, on the other hand, has been a drag on the economy. Exports fell in both the first and second quarter while imports increased. The weakness in the external sector suggests the Swiss franc may be overvalued.

With consumer price inflation still low — up only 0.5 per cent in August from a year ago — Swiss authorities could cut the discount rate again to offset some of the strength in the currency. We expect a 50 basis point cut in the discount rate — currently 3.5 per cent — within the next six months. We expect the franc to return to trading near S.F./DM 0.84 where it should remain steady for the next year. Against the dollar, the franc remained fairly steady in the last week, trading near S.F./U.S.\$ 1.28. Over the next six-to-twelve months, we expect the franc to appreciate against the dollar to S.F./U.S.\$ 1.26.

Canadian dollar

Fundamental View: Canadian markets appear to have shrugged off anxiety about a Quebec secession following the Sept. 12 election. The election revealed that the Parti Quebecois's base support is probably not broad enough to carry out a successful secession referendum. The Canadian dollar, which spent most of the year in the doldrums, is quickly appreciating on this new market fervour. The C\$ has risen to C\$/U.S.\$ 1.34 from C\$/U.S.\$ 1.37 just prior to the election results.

Now that attention can focus on economic fundamentals, we expect the C\$ to be trading near 1.30 in six months time and 1.28 in twelve months time based on strong non-inflationary growth and improved budget deficits. In the first half of the year, real GDP in Canada grew 5.4 per cent, but consumer price inflation is still expected to be up only 0.5 per cent in 1994. Furthermore, we expect the federal government budget deficit to be C\$2.3 billion below the Ministry of Finance's projection of C\$39.7 billion and C\$6.5 billion below the 1993 budget deficit.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY OCTOBER 1, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Daytime finds you eager to make some interesting changes that you couldn't effect during the week and you will also have the opportunity to arrange matters at a distance with those different from yourself.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is a good day for keeping in touch with those at quite a distance, so write, use the telephone, etc. A new contact proved helpful.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Get at those reports, bills, etc. about which you have been procrastinating and be accurate and efficient in the manner you do them.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) The promises you have not completed where partners are concerned can be handled nicely now. Be more alert to new and interesting projects.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get caught up on all those small tasks ahead of you and they are soon cleaned up. Avoid a bothersome person.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) During your spare time, arrange recreational appointments with your friends so that all will be prepared. Get creative tasks done with a flair.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is a good day for shopping for home and family needs and for getting the house in fine order. Be sure children are well-mannered.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Get into Saturday routines and handle them well. Complete what has been difficult to accomplish during the busy work week.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A good day to tune up your home and make the repairs which are necessary. See to it that all is more streamlined for greater efficiency.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Early take any health treatments you may need and get your appearance improved. Make good impressions upon those in authority.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You can handle all those private affairs early in the day and clear the deck for more important activities in the near future.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Bring those wishes closer by applying yourself seriously to gain them. The evening is fine for being with a loved one and good friends.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Make improvements to civic and credit affairs which apply to you. An influential person will then give you the backing you desire.

Birthstone of October: Opal — Turmaline

Peanuts



Andy Capp



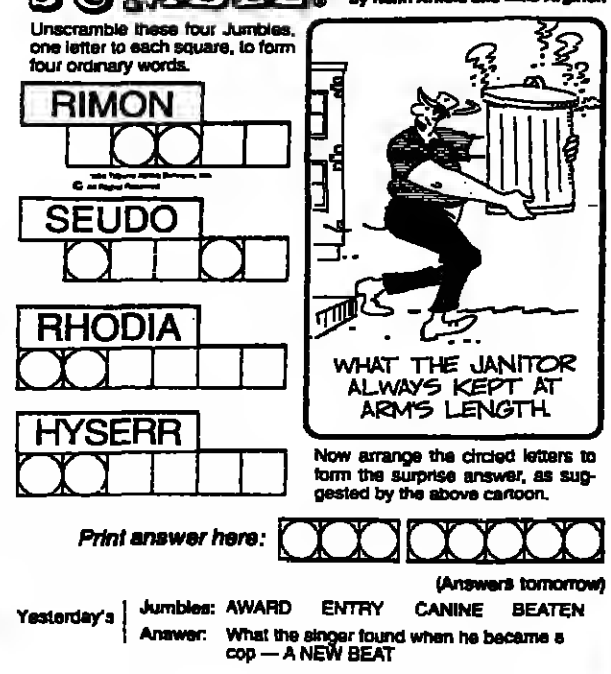
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THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



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THE Daily Crossword by Betty Jorgensen



Financial Markets

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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 28/9/94	Tokyo Close 29/9/94
Sterling Pound	1.5746	1.5762
Deutsche Mark	1.5528	1.5516
Swiss Franc	1.2870	1.2877
French Franc	5.2905	5.2875
Japanese Yen	99.00	98.75
European Currency Unit	1.2315	1.2329

USD Per STG European Opening at 8:00 a.m. +1:00

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Date: 29/9/1994

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.75	5.00	5.37	5.87
Sterling Pound	5.18	5.08	6.00	7.06
Deutsche Mark	4.66	4.87	5.00	5.43
Swiss Franc	3.56	3.81	4.06	4.37
French Franc	5.28	5.40	5.75	6.75
Japanese Yen	2.12	2.16	2.25	2.50
European Currency Unit	5.50	5.81	6.12	6.75

Interest rate for 100,000 or equivalent.

* 21 days

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 29/9/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6970	0.6990
Sterling Pound	1.0975	1.1030
Deutsche Mark	0.4467	0.4509
Swiss Franc	0.5410	0.5437
French Franc	0.1315	0.1322
Japanese Yen	0.7050	0.7055
Dutch Guilder	0.4009	0.4079
Swedish Krona	0.0447	0.0449
Italian Lira	0.0447	0.0449
Belgian Franc	0.0447	0.0449

* Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 29/9/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8330	1.8500
Lebanese Lira	0.040760	0.042150
Saudi Riyal	0.1855	0.1874
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3130	2.3470
Qatari Riyal	0.1903	0.1923
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.8310	1.8170
UAE Dirham	0.2750	0.3250
Greek Drachma	0.2750	0.3250
Cypriot Pound	1.3925	1.4950

* Per 100

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

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Trading at the AFM picks up

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Trading picked up and prices also rose last week at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) following intervention by some of the major institutional buyers in the market to avert a further slide caused by reported taxation proposals, brokers said Friday.

Another reason cited behind the upturn in the market was also reports that Israel and Jordan had made major progress in their peace negotiations and that the Jewish state was poised to announce the beginning of a military withdrawal from Jordanian lands it has occupied since 1948.

The weekly report of the AFM said turnover during the week rose to JD 2.5 million, up 57.4 per cent from last week's JD 1.6 million.

The general share price index based on 60 major companies rose by 4.8 points, or 3.7 per cent, during the week

to close at 146.1 points, the AFM report said.

Shares of 73 companies were traded during the week, with 61 of them showing gains, five losing and seven remaining stable.

The separate sectoral indices showed that industrial stocks registered the highest weekly increase, by 7.4 points or six per cent, followed by the services sector (5.5 points or 4.1 per cent), commercial banks and financial corporations (3.5 points or 2.3 per cent) and the insurance sector (0.8 points or 0.6 per cent).

Industrial stocks also accounted for the biggest share in the trading volume with JD 4.4 million, or 51.8 per cent, followed by commercial banks and financial corporations with JD 2.1 million, or 24.7 per cent, the services sector with JD 1.9 million, or 22.2 per cent, and insurance stock with JD 100,000, 1.2 per cent.

The AFM report said 3.4 million shares changed hands

under 6,112 contracts during the week.

The rise in volume and prices follows three weeks of a slide in the market sparked by fears that capital gains in the AFM would be removed from the list of exemptions from income tax of up to 35 to 40 per cent, brokers noted.

The losses in share prices in the market since the beginning of September had been an average of about eight per cent, but in some cases the drop was as high as 20 per cent, said the brokers, who cannot be identified by name under standing AFM guidelines.

"Obviously some of the institutional investors decided that the slide was going too far and they decided to intervene to check it," said one broker. "The result was the boost that the market saw last week."

According to the broker and others, another encouraging factor for reluctant investors was reports of a "breakthrough" in

Jordanian-Israeli peace negotiations.

"Many investors were discouraged by the slow pace in the negotiations and indications that Israel was trying to prolong the talks as much as possible," said the broker, noting that many speculators were hoping that progress in Jordanian-Israeli peace negotiations would lead to foreign investments in the Kingdom.

Investors also appear to be bracing for benefits from the Casablanca economic summit of Middle Eastern and North African countries. The summit, an offshoot of the Arab-Israeli peace process, is expected to produce agreements on economic cooperation and investments in the Middle East, including Jordan.

"Fears of capital gains being taxed remain very much in the market, but the optimism triggered by expectations from the peace process appears to be the balancing factor for the moment," said the broker.

CFA franc devaluation seen boosting tourism

ABIDJAN (AFP) — The January devaluation of the CFA franc has opened up a host of African countries to a tourism boom, a tourism expert has said.

Jean-Pierre Dnbarry, a

consultant for the Madrid-based World Tourism Organisation (WTO), told an international tourism conference that the countries within the CFA zone had become more competitive in the international tourism market despite price increases which

followed the 50 per cent devaluation last January.

"A meal worth 5,000 CFA francs used to cost the tourist from Paris 100 French francs. Even if the price goes up to 6,000 CFA francs after devaluation, it is not worth more than 60 French francs," Mr. Dnbarry explained.

"An item considered to be expensive by tour operators has become affordable."

The CFA franc, the common currency of some 14 French-speaking African countries, is tied to the value of the French franc. After being fixed at the rate of 50 CFA to one French franc for years, it was changed to 100 CFA in January.

Information gathered since then from the countries affected shows that an average price rise of about 35 per cent had taken place since devaluation, meaning a reduction for tourists with foreign currency of around one-third, as their foreign currency

now buys twice as much CFA.

While on-market hotel prices in Ivory Coast have gone up by about 70 per cent, in Gogo, Cameroon, Senegal and Mali, the price increase has been around 30 to 40 per cent.

If the post-devaluation price increase could be contained at between 20 and 40 per cent, efforts could be made "to win back a clientele which has turned its back on Africa on the grounds that it was too expensive," Mr. Dnbarry suggested.

However, he also noted that the devaluation had translated into a hike in airline ticket prices for those paying in CFA, along with a hike in the price of imported goods and services. He said some hotels have been forced to abandon refurbishment plans because of the devaluation.

He also stressed that the region needed promotion.

"Although the tour operators which schedule trips to French-speaking Africa acknowledge the beneficial effects of the devaluation, they still have to be convinced that they can once again stake their bets on this destination," he said.

China warns state enterprises to adapt or die

BEIJING (AFP) — A senior Chinese official has warned state firms making unprofitable products to improve their performance or see their energy, raw material and funding lines cut off, a report has said.

State Economic and Trade Commission Vice Minister Shi Wanpeng said such "compulsory means" should be used against any firms that continue to run up huge losses by churning out goods with no market, while profitable enterprises should be given access to bank loans, the China Daily reported.

The warning came as statistics indicated that state firms were finding it more and more difficult to sell the goods on the increasingly competitive Chinese market. Only 92.99 per cent of China's industrial products were marketable at the end of July 1.47 percentage points lower than at the same time last year, causing inventories of unsold goods to surge, the report said.

In the first half of the year, the value of stockpiled goods grew 11.72 per cent to 169.47 billion yuan (\$19.7 billion) on the same period in 1993 as industrial production soared 15.8 per cent while retail production increased just 4.8 per cent in real terms, it said.

Stockpiles are biggest in the steel, pig iron, automobile, motorcycle, video cassette recorder, gasoline, diesel oil, timber and cement industries, it said.

Mr. Shi called for the national marketability rate to be increased to 95 per cent, urging local officials to identify firms that should cut or even cease production.

Some 46.3 per cent of state firms were in the red in the second quarter of the year, with the sector loses an estimated 30 billion yuan (\$3.5 billion) annually.

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Hiroshima puts on Asian sporting show

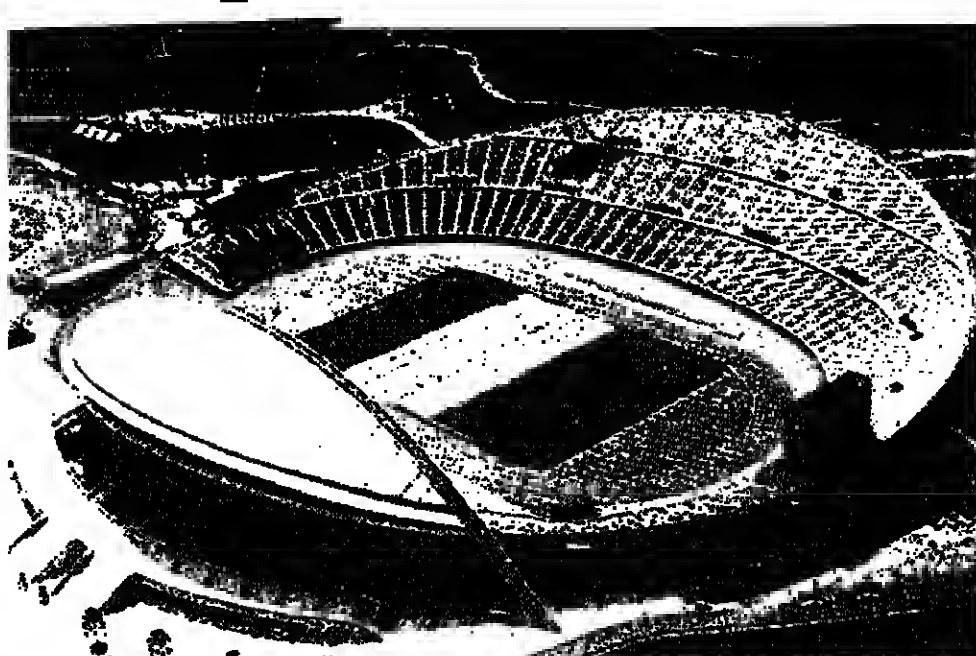
HIROSHIMA (AFP) — Hiroshima, a city rebuilt out of the nuclear holocaust, stages the most expensive sporting event ever when 40 countries representing more than half the world's population compete in the Asian Games.

The city has spent an astonishing \$15 billion, which is 10 times as much as Barcelona spent on the 1992 Olympics, on the same sort of stadiums and Games-related developments.

An overhead tram-line links the city centre to an athletes village which will be turned into an apartment complex after the games, and a new international airport offers countries.

China's world record-breaking women swimmers and runners will attract most of the attention when competition starts almost 45 years to the day after Mao Zedong founded the Chinese People's Republic.

The country has come long way since pingpong diplomacy drew it out of its international isolation and Mao took the Olympic ideal of taking part being more important than winning to an absurd conclusion. China's unbeat-



The big arch stadium for ceremonies, soccer games and track and field events

able table tennis players were ordered to rotate the world championship titles amongst themselves.

Smart team uniforms and expensive trainers have replaced shapeless tracksuits and shoddy shoes, although self-taught athletics coach Ma Junren insists turtle blood

and a secret elixir help Wang Junxia and Qu Yunxia run a marathon a day in training.

The two young women won gold medals at the 1993 World Athletics Championships in Stuttgart, Germany, and broke the world records for 1,500 metres, 3,000m and 10,000m two

weeks later in Beijing.

Le Jingyi, who won four gold medals in world record time, led the Chinese swimming team which won 12 out of 16 women's gold medals at the Rome world championships two weeks ago.

China's head coach has had to defend his record against

drug-taking allegations. Chen Yunpeng said the West was too willing to attribute China's outstanding sports achievements to drugs.

The West created the problem of drug-taking and now they are trying to pin it on us," he added.

The 12th games will present the largest programme ever: 337 competitions in 34 sports which include two largely unknown outside Asia.

Kabaddi is basically a boy's playground game of catch but Brazil's World Cup soccer star Romario would be hard-pressed to get into either the Malaysian or Thai sides at sepak takraw.

Sepak means kick in Malay and takraw is Tabi for ball. It's a three-a-side game on the equivalent of a volleyball court with the men kicking and heading a bamboo-women ball over a head-high net.

If television appeal is the sole criteria for Olympic selection — as beach volleyball's appearance at the Atlanta Games in 1996 suggests — then sepak takraw should be put on the Sydney agenda for 2000.

For the first time five former Soviet republics compete at the Games and Kazakhstan has set itself the high target of 100 medals from 300 competitors.

Indonesia, South Korea and China make the badminton tournament a mini world championship now that Scandinavian players can no longer match their speed and stamina.

Susi Susanti is expected to win both individual and team honours for Indonesia whose players are now effectively professional.

China, South Korea and Japan will share out the table tennis honours while World Cup champions Pakistan are favourites for the men's hockey.

Leandra Paes, who beat South African top-20 player Wayne Ferreira in a Davis Cup match recently, should win the men's tennis title for India.

China, top nation since the 1982 Games in Delhi, just hung onto their lead in the 1986 Games in Seoul where an athletics relay win on the last day enabled them to finish with one gold medal more than South Korea.

China says relations with Japan damaged

HIROSHIMA, Japan (R) — China Friday bluntly declared relations with Japan had been damaged by an invitation to a Taiwanese official to attend the Asian Games.

But while the issue sharply escalated as a diplomatic row, games organisers in Hiroshima breathed a sigh of relief when China at the same time announced it would not boycott the event's opening ceremony Sunday.

China has for weeks pressed Japan to withdraw an invitation for Taiwan's Deputy Premier Hsu Li-Teh to attend the ceremony, alarmed his presence might be regarded as a sign Taiwan was ending its international isolation.

Hsu's arrival in Okinawa in southern Japan Friday made him the most senior Taiwanese official to set foot in Japan since Tokyo switched ties to Beijing from Taipei in 1972.

At a press conference in Hiroshima, the head of the Chinese Olympic Committee made clear that even though Beijing could not stop Hsu's attendance, it would not forget the row.

"As you can see, Sino-Japan relations have been damaged. We have no responsibility for this. This is not a sports issue, this is a political issue," said Wei Jizhong, secretary-general of the Chinese Olympic Committee.

"Their (China's) reactions are too strong and unnecessary," Hsu told reporters before leaving Taipei.

"I am only to deliver the best wishes from our compatriots to our athletes in Hiroshima," he said.

China has hinted the row could affect Beijing's position on any Japanese application to become a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council and a Tokyo newspaper reported Friday the controversy could affect Japanese loans to China.

The Japan Times said already tough negotiations over details of a three-year package of yen loans to replace a six-year programme worth 810 billion yen (\$8.1

billion) that expires in 1996, had become harder.

"Prospects for an early agreement have suffered another setback as the diplomatic row between Japan and China over Taiwan's representation at the Asian Games damaged the political atmosphere surrounding the negotiations," it said.

Japan has insisted Hsu's presence is solely a sports issue and does not signal any change in its policy of having only diplomatic relations with Beijing.

Other foreign dignitaries will include Iran's vice president, Iran prime ministers of Kazakhstan and Thailand, Indonesia's defence

minister, Bhutan's foreign minister and Singapore's defence minister.

Wei defended China's tough stance, saying Taiwan was hiding behind sports to gain a political advantage.

"We did not come to destroy the games, we did not come to destroy the atmosphere of the Asian sports family," he said.

Asked if China would boycott the opening ceremony, which would be watched by Hsu and other foreign dignitaries, Wei said China realised the symbolic importance of the opening ceremony for the success of the games as a whole.

"Therefore, the Chinese

sports delegation will be present at the opening ceremony and also display the high spirit of the Chinese people," he said.

Beijing has regarded Taipei as a renegade province since the 1949 end of the Chinese civil war when the defeated nationalists fled to the island, and has pressured other countries not to have ties with the island.

Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui, originally invited to attend the opening ceremony, was forced to cancel his visit under pressure from China.

A record 7,300 athletes and officials from 42 nations are due to compete.

Only gold is good enough for S. Korea

HIROSHIMA (AFP) — South Korea's World Cup soccer squad has been told there is no point coming back from the Asian Games with anything but the gold medal.

The South Koreans kick off the Hiroshima tournament Saturday expecting to score a hatful of goals against Nepal in one of six matches on the opening day.

Huge bonuses have been promised to the players, now coached by former Soviet World Cup coach Anatoly Byshovets, if they can win the title from under the noses of their Japanese hosts. But a silver or anything less will earn nothing.

Byshovets, who coached the Soviet soccer team to the Olympic gold in Seoul in 1988, was technical advisor to Korean coach Kim Ho at this year's World Cup. He took over when the side were held to a goalless draw by Bolivia and failed to qualify for the second round.

By all accounts, the Ukrainian was the real tactician in South Korea's impressive performances in their other matches at USA '94. They shocked the Germans by scoring two late goals to bounce back after trailing 3-0. They also held the strong Spanish side.

"This is a different tournament though," said Byshovets. "It's a new challenge and people expect a lot of us back home."

The bonuses are on offer because the South Korean Football Association is anxious to step up its claim to host the 2002 World Cup finals. Japan are their main rivals as FIFA, the world body, have promised the finals will be the first in Asia.

"It would obviously be good for us to win in Japan," said Byshovets.

South Korea will have nearly all of the World Cup squad on duty, including Noh Jung-Yoon, who plays for local side Hiroshima Sanfrec-

ce in the Japanese J-League. One of the notable absences will be goalkeeper Choi In-Young, who said he would not play for the national side again after letting in three goals against Germany at the World Cup finals.

Cha Sang-Kwang is the new number one keeper. Only about half the regular side will start against Nepal, who can expect a hiding. Hong Myong-Bo will be missing because of a knee injury. But he is expected to be fit for the rest of the tournament.

South Korea could meet Japan in the quarterfinals if they win Group A, which also includes Kuwait and Oman — and Japan finish second in Group D.

The host nation feel they have the toughest group. They are in with the United Arab Emirates, World Cup finalists in 1990. But they should still win which would delay any confrontation with the Koreans until the final. Japan start the tournament next Monday against the UAE. Their Brazilian coach Ricardo Falcao said "it couldn't have been a worse draw."

Kazuyoshi Miura, Japan's star striker, has returned from Italy to play in the tournament. Though injured in his first game for Genoa, he is training and will be fit to play on Monday. All of Japan's games are a sell-out.

Saudi Arabia would have been favourites had they sent their World Cup side. But the Saudis headed an appeal from the Asian Football Confederation to make the tournament under 23 and are giving their World Cup squad a rest. The Saudis start against Uzbekistan Saturday.

Saturday's fixtures — Group A: Turkmenistan vs China, Yemen vs Bahrain, Group B: Saudi Arabia vs Uzbekistan, Malaysia vs Hong Kong, Group C: South Korea vs Nepal, Kuwait vs Oman.

Doping tests will be elaborate

HIROSHIMA, Japan (AP) — It sounds almost cloak and dagger. Each day at an appointed time, two nondescript couriers climb aboard a passenger jet with luggage that is carefully sealed, and extremely sensitive.

But what the Asian Games couriers will be escorting halfway across Japan each day for analysis won't be state secrets. It will be samples of urine. Fifty or 60 cups at a time.

"We don't have the facilities to test for doping here," said Shuso Nomura, the man in charge of the medical and health division of the games' organising committee. "So we'll have to send all that we collect back to Tokyo. Of course, we'll have a big problem if any spill."

Nomura said the lab in Tokyo, 700 kilometres (437 miles) away, is the only one accredited by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to conduct the tests for

some 190 substances — from caffeine to anabolic steroids — that are banned or restricted at major international competitions.

Especially because of suspicions raised about some Chinese athletes, the watch on drugs looms large at the Hiroshima Games, which will bring together nearly 5,000 of Asia's best athletes for competition in 34 sports.

Rumours were rife that several outstanding performances by Chinese women at the World Swimming Championships in Rome less than a month ago were drug-enhanced.

Though none of the allegations were borne out by testing afterward, more than a dozen coaches filed a formal appeal with swimming's governing body for stricter testing and one complained that doping, real or perceived, had ruined the event.

China's contingent of women middle and long-

distance runners, nicknamed "Ma's Army" after coach Ma Junren, has also often been the subject of doping rumours.

They have not failed any tests either, and Ma has said he feeds them something much more traditional — elixir of turtle blood and caterpillar fungus.

Both the swimmers and the runners are expected to compete in the two-week games, which officially open on Sunday. Nomura said he is confident that any cheaters in Hiroshima will be caught.

"It's our hope that there will be no positive tests," he said. "But we think we will be able to find any violations."

Nomura acknowledged that not all medalists will be tested. Instead, the extent of testing will depend to a large degree on recommendations from organisations related to each particular sport.

Condoms restricted at Asian Games

HIROSHIMA (R) — The cream of Asia's sporting elite was in a lather on Friday over the limited distribution of condoms at the Asian Games.

Although condoms have been handed out freely at recent major sports events as an anti-AIDS measure, the organisers of the October 2-16 Hiroshima Games have decided on a "condom on demand" policy, requiring the athletes to pick them up from a large basket at the athletes' medical centre.

The basket, organisers said, would be in a "semi-private" waiting area in the medical centre at the games village.

"We are talking about an Asian culture where the free distribution of condoms may be frowned upon," said a games official. "But we have to be realistic when 7,000 mostly young people come together."

The organisers vetoed a proposal to have dispensing machines in the village, or even to include condoms in welcome packs for athletes, officials and volunteers.

Condoms, apart from sexual abstinence, are considered the best means of stopping acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

A Japanese condom maker, Okamoto, has donated 50,000 condoms and 7,000

AIDS-awareness leaflets in 11 languages are being distributed around Hiroshima.

The donated condoms are wrapped in a small packet emblazoned with the male and female dove symbols of the games, named Poppo and Cucu, hugging romantically.

One organiser said a ration of three per athlete had been considered sufficient for the two-week gala in this southern Japanese city — to the horror of some sportsmen and women.

"You've got to be joking. Some of these guys will be wanting three on the first night," said a South-East Asian athlete when told of the restriction.

But games officials defended their decision, saying they were confident of having enough condoms for all eventualities.

"We can't have free service because some people will take away too many," said Shuso Nomura, head of the game medical service. "We don't intend to control sex, just keep AIDS out of the village."

Nomura added that so far, demand had been low.

He said although unlimited condom distribution had become a regular feature of major world sporting events, the practice was still unusual in Asia and Hiroshima had taken the anti-AIDS fight



The male and female dove symbols of the Hiroshima Games, Poppo and Cucu

further than any other sport-fest on the continent.

Indian delegation chief Janardan Gehlot said there was no need for a large quantity of condoms under free distribution in an Asian context.

"After all, this is not Los Angeles or Barcelona," he said, referring to past free-wheeling venues of Olympic Games.

Competing nations in Hiroshima include the predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines and conservative Islamic states such as Iran and Saudi Arabia.

These nations deeply

oppose the use of condoms, arguing that they promote the spread of non-marital sex.

Recent Asian surveys have indicated an explosion of AIDS on the continent, with a seven-fold increase from more than 30,000 to around 200,000 in the past year.

A world health organisation report says there are more than 2.5 million people in Asia infected with HIV, the virus which leads to AIDS.

More than 10 million Asians are expected to be AIDS-infected by the year 2000.

Hiroshima on watch for Indian plague

HIROSHIMA (R) — The head of medical services at the Hiroshima Asian Games sounded a grim warning Friday over what would happen if India's plague epidemic broke out at the athletes village.

Shuso Nomura told Reuters that in the past week special medicine had been brought in to combat any outbreak of the disease among Indian athletes at the games, which open Sunday.

"I am watching, but not worrying," Nomura said. Nomura said he was in constant touch with doctors of the Indian contingent at the games to see if anyone developed symptoms of the disease which has claimed 50 lives in India since it broke out about one week ago.

Pneumonic plague started in the western Indian city of Surat, 270 km (160 miles) north of Bombay, and spread to other parts of India including the national capital of

New Delhi, where 88 people are quarantined.

Some 1,600 suspected plague patients are in Indian hospitals.

Nomura said there was a period of six days over which symptoms of the disease developed.

About half of India's 300 participants have arrived in Hiroshima and the others are due next week.

"If it (an outbreak of the disease at the village) happens, and I hope it never happens, I will have to clean the place, and check all those who came into contact with the person," he said, shaking his head in dismay at the task.

He said if there was possible case of plague speed would be vital in containing the disease.

"We will isolate anyone infected immediately," he said.

More than 7,000 athletes and officials are living and dining closely together in

huge blocks of apartments in the sprawling village on the outskirts of Hiroshima, a city of nearly one million people.

Pneumonic plague is highly contagious and spreads between humans through contaminated sputum or breath.

On arriving at the village, Indian athletes have been given special forms to fill in asking where they had lived in the past two weeks.

This precaution is apart from a yellow-form routinely distributed to arriving international passengers asking if they have had vomiting or diarrhoea.

Janardan Gehlot, head of the Indian delegation to the games, said no Indian participant had come from the plague affected areas.

He said the reports of the epidemic had also not affected the athletes psychologically, and they were ready for the competition ahead.

Another Indian official, Amrit Bose, said the athletes had all been in training camps far away from any area with the disease.

Health authorities, including the World Health Organisation (WHO), said the disease was under control. They emphasised that, while deadly if not treated, it can be easily cured.

The WHO said the outbreak was not likely to spread abroad and was expected to be over within three weeks.

It has also not warned travellers against going to India, but several foreign governments are taking steps to guard against the sickness — advising against travel to India, and screening or even barring travellers and cargo from India.

Clearly irritated by the action of some foreign governments, the Indian foreign ministry has sent a statement to embassies that the situation was well under control.

Japanese police on full alert for games

HIROSHIMA (R) — Police were on full alert at the Asian Games here Friday after homemade rocket parts were found in raids on Japan's most feared radical group which plans to disrupt a visit by Emperor Akihito to the event.

A police spokesman said the rocket parts, weapons and six pounds (3.3 kg) of gunpowder were seized earlier Friday in raids in Tokyo on several "warehouses" of the Chukakuha (middle core faction).

After the parts were discovered an alert went out to Hiroshima police who beefed up already stringent security for the visit Sunday by Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko to open the games.

They leave the same day on a 13 day tour of Spain and France.

Chukakuha have also threatened to disrupt the royal couple's European tour.

Police also have issued an all-point bulletin for the arrest of Toshiaki Tajima, the 39-year-old leader of Chukakuha.

The 4,800-strong Chukakuha has claimed responsibility for scores of bombings, including an abortive rocket attack on foreign dignitaries during the 1986 Tokyo summit.

Rocket-like projectiles fired by a sophisticated timing device that slid open the windows of an apartment, flew four km (2.5 miles) and missed U.S. President Ronald Reagan, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and their colleagues by 30 metres (160 feet).

"This (the crackdown) is part of our efforts to prevent possible guerrilla attacks by the leftist group," said a police spokesman in Tokyo.

In Hiroshima, a police spokesman said they have mobilised an unprecedented 4,700 policemen in the city and surrounding areas to provide security for the two-week Asian Games.

"I believe this is the tightest-ever security since our headquarters were formed," the Hiroshima spokesman said.

"This is not only for the emperor, but also for VIP persons from overseas."

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U.S. beat Germany in volleyball championship

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Brazil, the world's top ranked team, Thursday needed five sets to defeat mid-ranked Argentina while defending champion Italy handily beat China in the first round of the 13th Volleyball Men's World Championship.

Coming from behind, Brazil won 3-2 (7-15, 10-15, 15-4, 15-10, 15-10) but had a difficult time challenging 16th-ranked Argentina to the first two sets.

Brazil, in Group B, changed its game in the third set, bringing in setter Casio Pereira to improve its play.

Playing in the northern city of Salónica, Group C's Italy had an easier time defeating China 3-0 (15-8, 15-8, 15-4).

In other games, Group A's Greece easily defeated Canada 3-0 (15-7, 15-3, 15-12) while in Group D the Netherlands beat Sweden 3-1 (15-8, 15-9, 12-15, 15-5).

Canadian coach Clement Lemieux still held out hopes for his team.

"We didn't show at all, we could have won the third set but I am still confident we

can make a good showing in the world championship," he said.

In earlier matches, the United States beat Germany 3-1 (15-13, 14-16, 15-4, 15-10) and Russia beat Algeria 3-0 (15-10, 15-6, 15-3) in their Group A match.

Group D's Cuba beat South Korea 3-2 (12-15, 17-16, 15-9, 9-15, 15-10) while in Group C Bulgaria downed Japan 3-1 (16-14, 15-9, 14-16, 15-11).

Groups A and B play in Athens while C and D play in the northern Greek city of Salónica.

In Group B, the United States started off shakily against Germany, fighting back from 1-6 to take the first set 15-13. Then they were again down 1-6 when coach Frederick Sturm sent Dexter Rogers to substitute for Jeff Nygaard.

"We lost the set 16-14 but we felt we were very competitive in the match. We found a group that could play well together and that was a big factor in our win," Sturm said after the match.

Al Maktoum springs another big surprise

NEWMARKET (R) — Top owner Hamdan Al Maktoum landed a Group One race with a complete outsider for the second time in five days when 33-1 chance Fard won the Middle Park Stakes Thursday by an impressive three and half lengths.

On Saturday, the same owner sprang one of the biggest surprises for years when 66-1 shot Maroof took the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Ascot.

Fard stole a march on his more fancied rivals with a strong run up the rails inside the final furlong (200 metres).

Green Perfume, a 5-1 chance ridden by Richard Quino, finished second, a neck clear of Fallow, also 5-1.

Ridden by Willie Carson, who was enjoying his fourth success in the race, Fard obviously benefited from wearing blinkers for the first time.

The win came as something of a surprise to the owner.

101-year-old swimmer sets world record

BRISBANE (R) — Move over Kieren Perkins, Australia has a new world record-breaking swimming sensation — 101-year-old Mary Maina.

On Friday, Maina set a world record for the women's 50 metres freestyle in the 100 years-plus category at the World Masters Games.

Maina clocked five minutes 12.34 seconds and immediately declared her readiness to undergo a drug test. "I think I'm glad it's over," said Maina, who swam sidestroke and was the only competitor in her age group.

Her pace was just a little slower than that of fellow Queenslander Perkins, who has set world marks for the men's 400, 800 and 1,500 metres freestyle since late August and would have been well past 500 metres by the time Maina finished her 50.

Inter crash out of UEFA Cup

LONDON (R) — Italian soccer suffered more penalty shoot-out agony Thursday when Internazionale were bundled out of the UEFA Cup in the first round by Aston Villa.

The English Premier League side, 1-0 down after the first leg, deservedly levelled the tie on aggregate thanks to a 41st minute goal from Ray Houghton and forced Inter to take their chances from the penalty spot.

As with Italy in the World Cup final against Brazil in July, they proved unequal to the task as first Davide Fontolan and then Ruben Sosa missed the target.

Villa's Phil King then blasted a left-foot shot past Italy goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca to give his side a 4-3 win on penalties.

The result was just reward

for Villa's positive soccer in a relentless match which saw several chances at both ends.

For Houghton, who scored the winning goal for Ireland against Italy at Giants Stadium in their 1-0 World Cup win, it was again a case of being in the right place at the right time.

He was lurking in the Inter penalty area when the ball flew unexpectedly to him off a defender's head and the midfielder volleyed past Pagliuca from close range.

The Inter striking pair of Sosa and Dennis Bergkamp always looked dangerous on the break but it was Villa who came closest to settling the tie in the second period of extra time.

A superb lob from Guy Whittingham left Pagliuca stranded. But the ball bounced off the bar towards Houghton who slid his shot

wide of the post.

After Fontolan had put his penalty over the bar, Villa's delight was cut short when Whittingham's attempt was smothered by Pagliuca.

But the shoot-out then took a decisive twist when Sosa crashed his spot-kick against the cross-bar, leaving defender King to apply the killer blow.

Werder Bremen also completed a successful week for German clubs following the successes of Borussia Dortmund, Eintracht Frankfurt, Kaiserslautern and Bayer Leverkusen, who all advanced in the UEFA Cup, and Bayern Munich, who won their champions league match against Dynamo Kiev Wednesday.

Bremen overcame Maccabi Tel Aviv of Israel 2-0 with a goal direct from a corner by Mario Basler after 81 minutes

wrapping up the tie 2-0 on aggregate after the first leg ended 0-0.

The biggest winners of the night were Panathinaikos of Greece who thrashed Pirin of Bulgaria 6-1 for an 8-1 aggregate victory.

The Greeks' hero was Polish international striker Krzysztof Warzycha who scored a hat-trick with two in the last three minutes. Sampdoria of Italy also made it through to the next round but were made to work very hard for their 4-3 aggregate win against Norwegian part-timers Bodo Glimt.

Bodo twice led by two goals in the first leg before Sampdoria brought the first leg deficit back to 3-2.

But the Italians were not so generous Thursday, with first half goals from England captain David Platt and Attilio Lombardo putting the Ita-

lians 4-3 up which is how it stayed until the end.

Platt twisted his ankle as he scored and could be out of action for several weeks.

Sampdoria's win followed successes by Serie A rivals Napoli, Parma, Juventus and Lazio in the UEFA Cup and Milan in the champions league, but UEFA Cup holders Internazionale failed to make it seven wins out of seven for the Italian league.

They lost 4-3 on penalties to Aston Villa in England after the sides finished 1-1 on aggregate at the end of extra time.

Villa won 1-0 on Thursday with the only goal coming when Irish international Ray Houghton blasted the ball past Gianluca Pagliuca after 41 minutes.

It was the second time Houghton had scored against Pagliuca this summer, the first was when he scored Ireland's winning goal against Italy in the first round of the World Cup in June.

Thursday's match was played at a fantastic pace throughout and was in many ways a classic confrontation between the English and Italian styles which Villa dominated in the second half.

They went close to scoring countless times and almost won the game a minute from time when Guy Whittingham chipped the ball over Pagliuca only to see the ball hit the top of the bar.

The first six penalties were scored in the shootout before Davide Fontolan blasted the ball over the Villa bar. Pagliuca then saved Whittingham's penalty. Uruguayan Ruben Sosa then hit the Villa bar with his, before Phil King blasted his spotkick into the centre of Pagliuca's net to give Villa a famous victory.

The only other game to be decided by penalties was the Cup Winners Cup between Ferencvaros of Hungary and CSKA Moscow of Russia which ended 3-3 on aggregate after extra time. Ferencvaros won the shootout 7-6.

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SOUTH
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♥ A Q 5
♦ 10
♣ J 3

The bidding:
North East South West
Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♠.
Accurate defense is a real test of one's deductive ability. You see only half your side's assets and what seems obvious is not necessarily correct. Consider this hand.
The opponents land in a southward auction. Note North's jump raise with only three-card support. Since that player is a passed hand and a response of two diamonds, which is no longer forcing, might get passed. North had little choice except to raise spades to the appropriate level.
West led the ten of clubs and East won the first two tricks in that suit. What would you, as East, do at the third trick?
The ten of hearts is the obvious shift. Declarer can then rise with the ace, cross to the ace of diamonds and, carefully preserving all of dummy's trump entries, ruff a diamond. Declarer gets back to the board with a trump for another diamond ruff. Should either defender show out, declarer restores dummy with a trump and leads a heart toward the queen and the contract will hinge on the location of the king of hearts. But when both defenders follow to the third diamond, declarer uses one of dummy's remaining trumps as an entry to ruff out the last diamond and another to take a heart discard on the fifth diamond, making 10 tricks.
If East reasons that any heart lead a declarer because only get away on diamonds, the winning defense emerges from the shadows—attack dummy's entries. East must return a trump at trick three and one of declarer's dummy entries is spent before it can be put to productive use. As the cards lie, declarer will go down.

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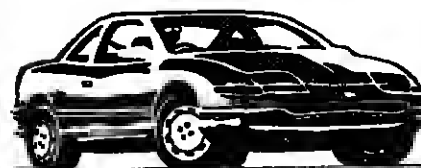
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Gammoh quashes speculation of cut in customs duties

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Finance Minister Sami Gammoh on Friday quashed widespread speculation that the government was poised to announce a reduction of customs duties on cars and said there was no compelling reason for Jordan to adopt such a move.

Mr. Gammoh said there was no ground to reports that the Ministry of Finance and Customs was drawing up amendments to customs tariffs on cars.

He also rejected reports that the U.S., an ardent advocate of reduced customs duties on cars, was pressuring Jordan.

"There are no plans to reduce customs duties on cars," the minister told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Gammoh also rejected reports that Jordan was dithering to reduce customs duties on cars under the economic restructuring programme being implemented under the supervision of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

"The programme only says that customs duties should be in alignment with the economic priorities and interests of the country," and thus leaves it to the government to determine the best course of action, he pointed out. "The government does not feel that there is any need for any reduction of customs duties on cars."

"We are very much committed to the economic restructuring programme and have no intention to deviate from it," said the minister. "But it does not automatically mean that we have to amend customs tariffs."

Asked whether the U.S., whose cars sales to Jordan have suffered as a result of high customs duties on vehicles of higher engine sizes, was exerting pressure on the government to reduce the tariff, the minister said: "There is no doubt that the U.S. would like to see the customs duties on cars reduced, but they understand our position and are not applying any pressure on us."

U.S. Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown, who visited Jordan late last year, went out of his way to specifically

mention in a speech here that American car sales to Jordan were suffering as a result of the Kingdom's customs tariff structure.

He noted that the customs department was assessing duties on the basis of the engine size, leading to higher customs duties on American cars which have traditionally higher-size engines.

The U.S. wants Jordan to assess and levy customs duties on the basis of the cost price of vehicles. This would improve the sale of American cars to Jordan but not lead to higher car exports from the U.S. to the Kingdom than from Japan or Korea.

American-made smaller cars carry a higher price tag when compared with their Japanese and Korean counterparts.

Mr. Gammoh's comments effectively do away with market speculations that prices of cars were about to go down. Car dealers have been complaining of lean business in the past months as many potential buyers appeared to be opting to wait for reduced customs duties.

"People would come and look at cars, ask for prices and customs duties; and then leave quietly without making any deals," said a used-car dealer in Marka. "Many of them say they prefer to wait until the customs duties went down."

Agents for European and Japanese made cars have also reported reduced business but not of a serious nature that would affect their operations.

"People have different approaches to paying customs duties on used cars and on new ones," said one automobile dealer. "They may not mind paying a higher amount for a brand new car but hesitate when it comes to paying customs duties on used cars."

The government has already reduced customs duties on medium-size pickup trucks, bringing down prices by JD 2,500 to JD 5,000.

That move was prompted by the government's concern to support the agriculture sector since it believes that medium-size pickup trucks are mostly used by farmers and for agricultural purposes.



RABIN IN AQABA: His Majesty King Hussein with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Rabin in Aqaba on Thursday (Petra photo)

Jordan adopts anti-plague measures

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian authorities have adopted measures to prevent the spread of the pneumonic plague from India but Royal Jordanian (RJ) has not suspended its flights to and from New Delhi.

An RJ official said the airline had no instructions to cancel any of the two weekly flights to India — New Delhi and Calcutta — and therefore the Friday and Sunday trips would go ahead as scheduled.

The RJ official told the Jordan Times there was no cancellation by any of the 81 passengers booked on Friday's flight to New Delhi.

RJ Chief Executive Officer Nader Dahabi was quoted by the local press as saying that quarantine regulations were adopted by the airline to prevent plague-carriers from coming to Jordan.

A separate lounge has been set aside Queen Alia International Airport for passengers arriving from India and specialists from the Health Ministry would be examining them to ensure they are free of the disease, Mr. Dahabi said.

RJ planes are sprayed with special anti-plague chemicals and food remaining aboard planes is destroyed.

Health Minister Aref Batayneh said medical teams have been assigned at the border posts to examine travellers from India and another team of specialists has been assigned at the airport to check transit passengers from India.

The Health Ministry is also providing ultracycline pills to passengers arriving from the stricken areas as a precautionary measure to protect them from infection, Dr. Batayneh said.

At Aqaba, he said all crew aboard ships are checked and the goods sprayed with pesticides. Special inspection is being carried out to ensure that the vessels do not carry rats or insects.

Dr. Batayneh said that the Health Ministry has appointed a special medical team to be in constant touch with the Indian authorities and further measures could be adopted in Jordan in the light of the team's reports.

A great deal of debate centred on public confidence in the electoral system, and a general consensus was reached on the need for non-governmental organisations to supervise elections.

It was agreed that electoral laws should embrace all sectors of society and therefore should include a method of registration which avails all eligible voters the opportunity to cast their ballots.

A long and inconclusive debate ensued regarding female representation in Parliament and the possible introduction of a quota for women. On the one hand a quota system was felt to be a start in the right direction, but on the other many said that it may only cater for women who would not necessarily represent

Forum on Election Law sees need for changes

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Participants at a conference on "Current Trends in Electoral Systems" concluded Thursday that Jordan's current electoral law requires amendments that would make it compatible with Jordan's quest for a democratic system of government.

Having examined worldwide electoral systems on Wednesday the conference turned to topics related to public confidence, the role of the mass media and electoral development in Jordan on Thursday.

The conference co-organised by the New Jordan Research Centre (NJRC) and the Washington-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), was hailed as a great success by participants who felt it was beneficial to discuss openly the pros and cons of the Jordanian electoral process in light of what they had learnt about other electoral systems.

The significance of the conference was complemented by the patronage of Taher Al Masri, speaker of the Lower House, and the attendance of Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi and House Vice-Speaker Abdul Razzaq Tbeishat as well as senators, deputies and political party leaders.

Although women participants were few, they displayed more active participation than their male counterparts.

The frankness of the debate was seen to be a demonstration of democracy in itself, but international participants warned that the achievement of a full democratic system was a slow process which necessitates cautious change and a pragmatic approach.

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The participants agreed that immunity of deputies should exist for the whole term of parliament and not just the duration of the session.

Immunity should not, however, obstruct the course of civil justice and in the event of a criminal offence the offending deputy should be turned over to the civil courts.

An important appeal was made by Faisal Hourani for an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands to allow Palestinians to enjoy democracy and to participate in elections.

The Ministry of Interior summoned some of the participants, including Hani Hourani, the director of NJRC, and international participants, Thursday morning and briefed them on the current situation.

The secretary general of the ministry expressed appreciation to the organisers of the conference.

With such encouragement it was agreed by all that should the Electoral Law be amended another conference should be convened early next year to review the developments.

Crown Prince heads for Washington

(Continued from page 1)

into the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River.

Israel has proposed to leave the water issue to an ad hoc committee and to press on with a peace treaty.

Talks on these problems will continue between the Israeli and Jordanian delegations after Monday's White House meeting.

Mr. Rabin was accompanied to the Aqaba talks by Chief of Staff General Ehud Barak and the head of the Israeli delegation to the negotiations with Jordan, Elyakim Rubinstein.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Crown Prince Hassan also participated in the talks.

While in the U.S., Crown Prince Hassan will also address the United Nations General Assembly.

In his address before the U.N. General Assembly, the Crown Prince will focus on specific areas, including Jordan's views of the Middle East peace process, means of addressing problems facing the United Nations to enable it perform its international mandate, and other issues, including Islam in the world, interfaith dialogue and human rights.

Prince Hassan is accompanied by Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan.

1 killed in Hebron

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on building in them over Palestinian objections.

An Israeli housing ministry official confirmed on Friday a report in the Maariv newspaper that 87 flats whose

Forum on Election Law sees need for changes

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construction was begun by the right-wing Likud government and completed after the Labour Party's Rabin became prime minister were for

rent.

In brief comments after the signing ceremony, Ambassador Egan told Jordan Television that the U.S. administration was concerned over the high burden of Jordanian debts and the impact of the problem on local development.

The Tokyo government said that while it opposes debt write-off it is willing to make more money available to the Kingdom to help it achieve the goal of self-reliance.

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Wreck of sunken Estonia located

TURKU, Finland (Agencies) — A Finnish ship fitted with a high-tech echo-sounding system has located the wreck of the ferry Estonia which sank off the Finnish coast with the loss of over 900 lives, the search ship's crew said Friday.

A member of the crew of the Suunta, contacted by telephone from Turku, Finland, said the wreck had been found by sonar tracking.

The crew had found the wreck shortly before 1600 GMT, he told AFP.

The Estonia sank in a storm early Wednesday in up to 90 metres of water while en route from Tallinn to Stockholm, drowning over 900 people as it sank in a matter of minutes.

The Suunta, which left the port of Hanko early Friday morning, had aboard a Finnish specialist to interpret the undersea sonar echoes.

Finnish Coast Guard Commander Raimo Tiilikainen said in Turku that after the ferry had been found, a remote-controlled submarine equipped with three video cameras would be towed to the wreck.

The resulting images will be passed to the international commission of inquiry probing the causes of the disaster, Mr. Tiilikainen said.

The head of Sweden's maritime safety division said Friday storm-driven waves tore open the bow door of Estonia, letting in water that caused the ship to roll over and sink.

"Apparently the bow door disappeared in a later phase," Bengt Erik Stenmark told a news conference in Stockholm. "But it had probably opened when it came into the open sea."

Mr. Stenmark also told reporters that another popular ferry, the Mariella, was barred Friday from leaving Stockholm harbour because of problems with the bow door monitoring system.

The ill-fated Estonia's "bow door had a break... and was exposed to the excessive forces of the sea," Mr. Stenmark said during the second of two hastily called news conferences.

"One man saw the ship sinking without the bow section," he said, "and another was walking in knee-high water on the car deck." Mr. Stenmark said an "intelligent guess," based on these witness reports, was that the force of storm-driven waves could have widened a gap in the bow door, allowing more water in, and causing the ship to lose stability.

Two-thirds of Israelis want Golan plebiscite

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The government has the backing of 64 per cent of Israelis for a referendum on a withdrawal from the Golan Heights before signing a peace treaty with Syria, according to a poll published Friday.

The Yediot Aharonot newspaper found that 23 per cent preferred new elections while 11 per cent thought the treaty should simply be ratified by parliament.

And two per cent of the 521 people questioned this week voiced no opinion.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has promised to hold the first referendum in Israel if he reaches agreement with Syria on a substantial withdrawal from the strategic plateau in the 1967 war.

Five rebel Labour Party deputies have introduced a private bill in parliament designed to block a withdrawal. If passed it would require the government to win the support of 70 of the 120 members, or a 65 per cent majority in a referendum for any peace agreement with Syria.

Both targets have been deliberately calculated to be unattainable.

Another Israeli survey also found almost two-thirds of Israelis believe Israel will have to withdraw on the Golan Heights to achieve peace with Syria.

Israel Radio, which commissioned the Haifa University survey, said 63.3 per cent of the 1,550 Israelis polled answered "no" to the question "Is peace with Syria possible without territorial concessions?"

In a breakdown of the respondents by political affiliation, the poll found that 49.7 per cent of supporters of the right-wing Likud Party — which opposes any pullback on the Golan — said some withdrawal would be necessary for peace.

The radio released only a part of the poll prior to full publication on Saturday, and did not say whether those surveyed were asked for their views on the total Israeli pullout demanded by Syria in return for a full peace.

A dozen Israeli settlers on the Golan Heights who began a hunger strike 19 days ago in protest at feared territorial "concessions" by Israel to Syria said late Thursday they had ended their action.

PNA team

(Continued from page 1)

responsibility.

The status of Jerusalem and the holy shrines there will be discussed in two years from now, and as such the Palestinian leadership realises that bringing up the issue now with Jordan will serve no purpose," Mr. Khatib told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Khatib said Dr. Majali and Mr. Balawi agreed during their talks that a seven-member delegation of PNA ministers would come to Jordan on Tuesday to resume discussions on "cooperation in all spheres, including economy, communications, transport, health and judicial affairs."

It would be the second such meeting after the PLO objected to Israel's acknowledgement of the Jordanian role in Jerusalem in the Washington Declaration that the Kingdom and the Jewish state signed on July 25.

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Column

Fiji's top banker guilty of assault on spy boss

SUVA (R) — The head of the National Bank of Fiji (NBF), the Pacific island nation's biggest bank, was convicted Friday of assaulting the country's chief of intelligence during an angry scene at the banker's office. Suva magistrate Salesi Temo found NBF chief manager Visanti Makrava guilty of the common assault of Colonel Metusela Mui, director of the Fiji Intelligence Service. Mr. Temo acquitted Mr. Makrava of the more serious charge of assault causing actual bodily harm. In his written judgement, Mr. Temo urged the two men to reconcile by Oct. 28, saying he would pass sentence if they did not. Earlier, Suva Magistrate Court heard the two men had clashed over a search warrant Col. Mui wanted to use at the bank as part of an investigation. The warrant allegedly had expired. Col. Mui said Mr. Makrava swore at him and punched him in the face before being restrained. Mr. Makrava denied the charges. Counsel for Mr. Makrava alleged Col. Mui had tried to use the warrant to blackmail the bank into giving him a loan which previously had been refused. Col. Mui denied the allegation.

U.S., Russian 1st ladies tour hospital

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hillary Rodham Clinton balanced the roles of traditional first lady and crusader for health insurance reform as she escorted Naina Yeltsin on a tour of hospitals and theatres. Mrs. Clinton made clear she has not given up the fight on health care reform even though legislation has been declared dead in Congress for the year. But when asked what dominates the conversation when she and the wife of Russian President Boris Yeltsin chat in private, she reported: "We talk about food and flowers and children and husbands."

Neither woman was reticent about the public issues that concern them. Mrs. Yeltsin, who hopes to improve the quality of health care delivery inside a giant country where the provision of health services is a problem, toured a state-of-the-art centre for children's medicine at Georgetown University. "I wanted Mrs. Yeltsin to see how children are treated in our hospitals," Mrs. Clinton said. "They don't have the resources that we do."

Attempts are under way to offer doctors, training and equipment to help Soviet physicians improve the quality of care they offer. After viewing a patient attached to a lifesaving machine that can circulate blood while acting simultaneously as an artificial heart, kidney and lung, Mrs. Yeltsin exclaimed: "I would like to take this piece of America back with me."

Moments before, she had kissed the cheek of a six-year-old who has had two kidney transplants and said, "I have seen unique equipment and the great care taken here with children."

Kuanda's son gets suspended term on plot charge

LUSAKA (R) — A Zambian court Friday gave a son of former President Kenneth Kaunda a suspended three-month jail term for possessing a seditious document. Major Wezi Kaunda, who is also an opposition member of parliament, was sentenced for having a copy of a document called "the zero option" which outlined plans to wrest power from President Frederick Chiluba's government. The document included plans to fan student riots and strikes by workers. Maj. Kaunda was one of about 20 leaders of the opposition United National Independence Party (UNIP) detained in May 1993 in connection with the document. He was held for 68 days before he was released. Maj. Kaunda pleaded in mitigation of sentence that he was being discriminated against because he was a member of the Kaunda family. He also faces criminal charges brought earlier this month in connection with a brawl at a political rally addressed by his father, who is attempting a political comeback.

2 killed in Port-au-Prince

(Continued from page 1)

ing not to leave power without a fight. Thousands of American soldiers were deployed along the streets of the capital to try to maintain some order.

U.S. troops, their ranks swelling to more than 20,000 by Friday, seized control of state television and radio to try to stop propaganda by the pro-military mouthpieces.

At the same time, about 2,000 Haitians looted a warehouse belonging to an army leader. The seaside warehouse was near the site of a grenade explosion Thursday that killed at least seven people and wounded 86, by U.S. count.

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